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BIG SETBACK

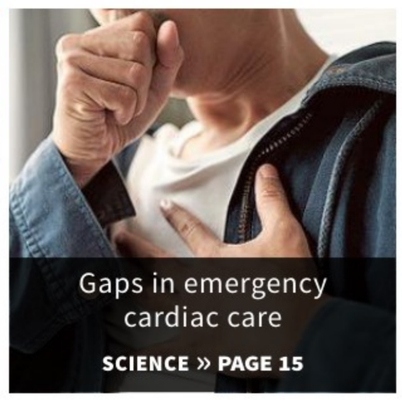
Dhoni to miss the first few matches

The 44-year-old suffered a calf strain during practice in the build-up to the 19th edition of IPL

SPORT» PAGE 19

Europe's only anti-war Prime Minister

PROFILES » PAGE 17



Gaps in emergency cardiac care

SCIENCE » PAGE 15

Oli arrested over Gen Z protest killings

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NEARBY

Lack of amenities forces villagers to move out

BHALEKADI
Lack of basic amenities, coupled with diseases bringing down yield in arecanut farms, have prompted residents of Bhalekadi in Sringeri taluk of Chikkamagaluru district to move out. » PAGE 9

UDAN: ₹146.89 cr. used for running 7 tier-II airports

BENGALURU
Seven airports in the State have been operationalised under UDAN and ₹146.89 crore was incurred for operating these airports. » PAGE 9

CLASSIFIEDS » PAGE 8
MAGAZINE » 8 PAGES

Varsity teacher booked for Islamophobic remarks

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Four days after a faculty member made Islamophobic slurs against a student at PES University, the Girinagar Police on Saturday registered a *suo motu* case against him.

Meanwhile, the university management has suspended, pending an inquiry, the faculty member who has been identifed as Muralidhar Deshpande.

A video, recorded on a phone on March 24, showed the professor calling a Muslim student "terrorist" in a classroom, and it went viral on social media.

A police complaint was lodged by the National Students' Union of India, with its Bengaluru Central District president, Lakshya Raj, seeking immediate action on Friday.

According to the complaint, the professor allegedly targeted the student, Affan, calling him a "terrorist" at least 13 times during a class which had around 60 students.

He is also accused of making a series of derogatory remarks, including "The Iran war happened because of people like you", "Trump will take you away", and "You are idiots, you will go to hell", creating what the complainant described as a hostile and humiliating classroom environment.

The complainant also alleged that CCTV footage from the classroom – considered potentially crucial evidence – was deleted, raising questions about accountability and transparency.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10

Backing their team

Royal Challengers Bengaluru fans in a rapturous mood during the first IPL 2026 match between RCB and Sunrisers Hyderabad at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru on Saturday.
K. MURALI KUMAR (RELATED REPORTS PAGES 2, 19)

Five corporations present budgets with total outlay of ₹20,217.66 cr.

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The five newly-formed city corporations under the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) have presented their maiden budgets, with the West City Corporation recording the largest outlay at ₹4,732.73 crore and the Central City Corporation having the smallest outlay of ₹3,426.60 crore.

Though the North and West corporations were projected to be the poorest among the five corporations, their outlays are the biggest, thanks to generous grants from the State, raising eyebrows. The North City Corporation follows West, with an outlay of ₹4,342.40 crore, while the East City Corporation has pegged its budget at ₹3,889.98 crore.

Corporation	Outlay (in crore)
West	₹4,732.73
North	₹4,342.40
East	₹3,889.98
South	₹3,825.95
Central	₹3,426.60
Total	₹20,217.66

The South City Corporation's outlay stands at ₹3,825.95 crore.

The combined budget outlay for 2026-27 across all five corporations stands at ₹20,217.66 crore, a marginal increase of 1.46% from ₹19,927.08 crore during the final year of the erstwhile Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP). All five corporations have presented surplus budgets in their first financial plans.

In terms of State support, the West City Corporation has received the highest contribution of ₹1,196.72 crore., followed by ₹886.24 crore for the North, ₹741.58 crore for the Central, ₹677.99 crore for the South, and ₹420.28 crore for the East City Corporation.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 7

BUDGET COVERAGE
» PAGES 6, 7

March economic data shows slowing growth

The Finance Ministry's Monthly Economic Review reports a 'moderation in economic momentum' due to the West Asia war; despite softening in output growth, demand appears relatively resilient

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

Economic indicators are beginning to show signs of slowing growth in response to the constraints created by the war in West Asia, the Ministry of Finance has said in a new report.

The Monthly Economic Review for March, released on Saturday by the Department of Economic Affairs, noted that the evolving conflict has "introduced a complex and multi-layered set of risks" for India, which is a major energy importer with strong trade, investment, and remittance linkages with West Asia.

Initial indicators

"Early high-frequency indicators for March 2026 suggest a moderation in economic momentum, reflecting the initial impact of these global developments," the report said. "E-way bill generation declined by 5.3% on a month-on-month basis up to March 22, indicating some moderation in goods movement, although it remained higher by 9.4% on a year-on-year basis."

"Flash PMI [Purchasing Managers' Index] estimates for March 2026 point to a softening in output growth following the energy price shock," it added.

However, the report noted that demand appears "relatively resilient".

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 11

Slow but steady

The Department of Economic Affairs has released its Monthly Economic Review for 2026

- The report states that developments in West Asia may cause a **slowdown in economic momentum for India**
- It cites deceleration in indicators such as **e-way bill generation, Purchasing Managers' Index, and rural sentiment indicators**
- Macroeconomic impact include **higher petroleum import bills, reduced exports and potential reduced remittances**
- Sectors such as **textiles, leather, and gems & jewellery** are facing reduced competitiveness

Two Indian LPG ships cross Strait of Hormuz

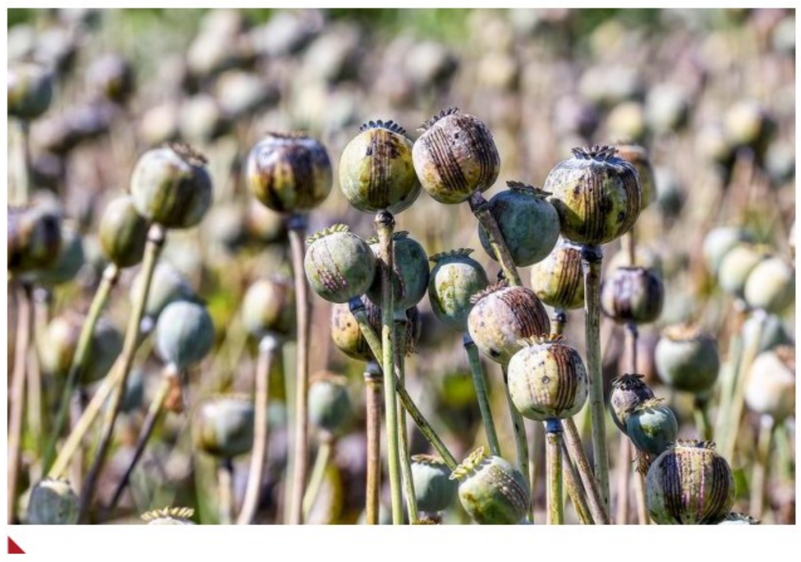
CHENNAI
BW Tyr and *BW Elm*, two Indian-flagged LPG carriers, crossed the Strait of Hormuz on Saturday, as per tracker websites. A Greek-owned ship chartered by Pakistan has also crossed the strait. » PAGE 14

Israel reports missile attack from Yemen

JERUSALEM
Israel's military reported a first missile launch from Yemen since the West Asia war began, after Iran's Houthi allies threatened to join the fighting. There were no reports of any casualties in Israel. » PAGE 18

Sprout spread: Poppy plants, *Papaver somniferum*, which produces opium, planted in a field at Mandsaur in Madhya Pradesh. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

Field of dreams: A woman farm owner overseeing the lancing work in her opium field in Bahi village of Mandsaur district.



Ready for the draw: Poppy capsules after the first round of latex extraction. The latex can be extracted three or four times with the first product being the purest.

Petals and patience: Poppy flowers bloom in an opium field in late January. The cultivation usually begins after Deepavali and ends in March after Holi.

Licensed to bloom

Farming communities in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan cultivate opium, a practice passed down for generations and tied to tradition and prestige alike

A.M. Faruqui

There are only a few regions in India where legal cultivation of opium poppy is permitted.

Thousands of farming families in Madhya Pradesh's Malwa and Rajasthan's Mewar region sow the crop in small land plots under the licences issued by the Union government. The farming usually starts as the Deepavali festivities draw to a close.

The region produces nearly 85% of India's legally grown opium. The districts include Mandsaur, Neemuch and parts of Ratlam in Madhya Pradesh and Pratapgarh, Chittorgarh, and parts of Kota and Jhalawar districts in Rajasthan.

The cultivation practice in the region has been passed down through generations, with some families growing it for more than 200 years.

The opium, locally called *afeem*, is tied to family traditions and prestige alike with a popular saying – *afeem ka patta ladke se badhkar hai* (opium licence is bigger than a son).

Farmers say that the licence also helps with the marriage prospects of their children.

The farming requires skilled labour, nurturing of plants, and protection of the field and the yield. Across villages in Mandsaur, Neemuch and Jaora tehsil of Ratlam, one can witness small land parcels protected with fencing and saris used as covers, and nets covering the plots from the top.

The licensing, enforcement and procurement is controlled by the Central Bureau of Narcotics (CBN) that issues licences of two types. Under the opium gum licence, farmers are allowed to extract the latex by lancing the poppy capsule while under the concentrate of poppy straw (CPS) licence, the CBN procures the capsule without lancing and the poppy straw directly.

The crops are typically harvested in March after Holi.

Text by Mehul Malpani

Sharp edge: Traditional knives and tools used to lance the poppy capsules and collect opium latex.

Although there was great excitement for the IPL match between RCB and SRH, the flow of spectators into the stadium was orderly, the police ensured there were no gatherings, and the crowd was responsive to directions from the police. ALLEN EGENUSE J. (ANOTHER PHOTO: PAGE 10)

Chinnaswamy shows what preparation can do

RCB fans cheered enthusiastically ahead of the match, but also showed discipline and restraint; 2,000 police personnel were deployed for bandobast

Chetan B.C.
BENGALURU

A police officer managing the crowd using a bullhorn outside the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium for the opening IPL match between RCB and SRH in Bengaluru on Saturday. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

The scenes around M. Chinnaswamy Stadium on Saturday, ahead of the inaugural match of the Indian Premier League (IPL), were what the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) and Bengaluru City Police (BCP) had hoped for- people enthusiastically chanting "RCB... RCB..." but not in a frenzy. Clearly, everyone was chastened by the memory of last year's stampede during the Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) victory celebrations that claimed the lives of 11 fans.

The flow of spectators into the stadium was orderly, the police ensured there were no gatherings, everyone kept moving, and the crowd was responsive to directions from the police. There was some confusion among spectators due to changes in the entry gates, but it was managed quickly.

Clear directions

One of the major reasons for the stampede that occurred last year during the RCB's victory celebration was a lack of preparation, said an Assistant Commissioner of Police. "This time we have clear directions and our roles are defined," he added. With the deployment of over 2,000 police personnel for bandobast, the celebrations did not cross any line.

As has been the case over the years, a sea of red echoed with cheers of the RCB's talismanic batter, Virat Kohli. Artists painted fans' hands and faces with the RCB logo and name, while vendors did brisk business selling jerseys. As always, spotting a Sunrisers Hyderabad fan, the visiting team for the inaugural match, required effort, as red jerseys engulfed the iconic venue.

Banners with slogans such as "King is back", "Virat, the G.O.A.T.", and "E Sala Kooda Cup Namdu", among others, were a common sight. However, most of these writings and large photographs of players did not make it inside the stadium, as the police directed spectators to discard them before entry.

As instructed, the police teams around the stadium carried out foot patrols and sent away fans without authorised tickets. Requests from fans to stop for pictures or linger around were not entertained. Civil Defence personnel also helped keep the premises orderly.

'Lot has changed'

Smitha Rao, a spectator entering the stadium, said the arrangements reflected the preparatory work of the police and stadium authorities. "A lot has changed this time, with more police on the ground and no traffic on the roads around the stadium. Even the fans have last year's tragedy in mind, so they are cooperating with the police," Ms. Rao said.

Typically, during matches at the Chinnaswamy Stadium, Cubbon Road, Queens Road, and M.G. Road are clogged with vehicles as crowds gather at the gates and spill onto these roads, making commuting a nightmare. This time, however, vehicles moved seamlessly along these stretches, with barricades in place, traffic police assisting with regulation, and Civil Defence personnel deployed every 30-50 metres.

Karthik Reddy, Joint Commissioner (Traffic), told *The Hindu* that, as requested, many fans had used public transport or parked at designated spots and boarded shuttle buses. However, despite clearly marked cab pick-up and drop-off points, several people failed to follow them, prompting police to reprimand them.

Although the stadium authorities had erected large banners detailing gate numbers, many fans were confused about entry points. Constables and Civil Defence staff stepped in to guide them after checking their tickets.

Akshay Hakay Machhindra, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Central Division), told *The Hindu* that multiple briefing sessions had been conducted to familiarise officers with gate numbers and entry points, which helped manage effectively.

Digital tickets

The most common issue faced was spectators struggling to access their m-tickets. To curb black-market ticket sales around the stadium, 80% of tickets were made digital, requiring spectators to download QR code-enabled tickets from the RCB app five hours before the match. Many arrived at the venue and attempted to download them, but network issues persisted.

However, despite all these arrangements, black-ticket seekers were still present among the large crowd, eager to watch the home team on its turf.

MLA rejects IPL tickets, calls it 'VIP culture'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

S. Suresh Kumar.

S. Suresh Kumar, former Minister and BJP MLA, rejected free Indian Premier League match tickets offered to legislators, taking a strong stand against what he called "VIP culture" and "politics of entitlement".

While many cutting across party lines, including Leader of Opposition in the Assembly R. Ashok, demanded tickets, Mr. Kumar criticised the practice as damaging to the credibility of politicians/legislators and said such privileges, cutting across party lines, including under the leadership of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, had continued.

State BJP president B.Y. Vijayendra and Tejasvi Surya, BJP MP, have also opposed the distribution of IPL passes.

Following the demand for free tickets by legislators in the legislature, the Karnataka State Cricket Association has decided to issue two tickets each to legislators.

In a press statement, Mr. Kumar said, "That this VIP culture and politics of entitlement thrives cutting across party lines in the regime headed by self-declared socialist Chief Minister is certainly appalling."

"It is for this very reason the image, credibility and reputation of the politicians as a class have nosedived in the eyes of the people," he added.

He further criticised lawmakers for seeking privileges despite past tragedies, saying such actions show insensitivity and erode public trust.

Meanwhile, speaking in Mysuru, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah remarked, "Whoever wants to go can go. Earlier one ticket was given, now two tickets are being provided. If any MLA is not interested to avail tickets, they need not."

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by

Shri Rammohan Naidu Kinjarapu
Union Minister of Civil Aviation

Sunday, 29th March, 2026 | 10:30 AM | Rajkot International Airport, Gujarat

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Kids' Zone: Interactive play area for kids - Chandigarh, Adampur, Bathinda, Khajuraho, Jammu, Dehradun, Amritsar, Imphal, Gwalior and Agartala

Flybrary: The enjoyment of reading during travel- Chandigarh, Adampur, Amritsar, Barelliy, Hindon, Jammu, Khajuraho, Prayagraj, Srinagar, Imphal, Indore, Agartala, Jamnagar, Dehradun, Kullu and Kishangarh

AVSAR: Empowering local artisans by showcasing their products - Chandigarh, Jammu, Khajuraho, Kullu(Bhuntar), Varanasi, Imphal, Indore, Gwalior, Jabalpur, Agartala and Jamnagar

Infrastructure Upgradation: Boosting operational efficiency of airports - Jodhpur, Srinagar, Bhubaneswar, Darbhanga, Jharsuguda, Imphal, Indore and Bhopal

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A BG-BGE

Veiled vigilance: Fully grown poppy capsules in an field covered with a protective net.

Uninvited guest: Nilgai in a field in Neemuch district of Madhya Pradesh. The farmers have to take various safety measures to prevent them from munching on opium plants.

Men at work: Workers lancing the poppy capsules to extract raw opium latex.

Essential elixir: Raw opium latex oozing out of a poppy capsule in an opium field. The latex is procured by the Central Bureau of Narcotics.

Cooling yield: An opium farmer shows poppy seeds (*posto dana* or *khus khus*) obtained from opium poppy at Neemuch district. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

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- Computer Science & Engineering
- Computer Science & Engineering Spl. Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning
- Computer Science & Engineering Spl. Cyber Security
- Computer Science & Engineering Spl. Quantum Computing
- Computer Science & Engineering (Artificial Intelligence)
- Computer Science & Engineering (Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning)
- Computer Science & Engineering (Cyber Security)
- Electronics & Communication Engineering
- Electronics & Communication Engineering Spl. Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning
- Electrical & Electronics Engg.
- Electrical & Electronics Engg. Spl. Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning
- Food Processing & Engineering
- Food Processing & Engineering Spl. Internet of Things
- Mechanical Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering Spl. Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning
- Robotics & Automation
- Robotics & Automation Spl. Artificial Intelligence & Data Science
- Robotics & Automation Spl. Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning

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- Artificial Intelligence & Data Science
- Biotechnology
- Biomedical Instrumentation
- Computer Science & Engineering
- Computer Science & Engineering (Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning)
- Cyber Security
- Food Processing & Engineering
- Robotics & Automation
- Structural Engineering
- Virtual Prototyping & Digital Manufacturing
- VLSI Design

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A BG-BGE

NIMHANS study flags rising parental concern over children's screen time

Screen time is classified as high or low based on age-specific guidelines from global and Indian paediatric bodies

Afshan Yasmeen
BENGALURU

A recent study by researchers at the Services for Healthy Use of Technology (SHUT) Clinic at NIMHANS has highlighted growing parental concern over children's screen time, linking excessive use to loss of control and negative effects on overall well-being.

Published in the Industrial Psychiatry Journal, the study- "Technology use and screen time among children: Parental concerns from a cross-sectional survey in India"- surveyed 424 parents of children up to 18 years, examining usage patterns and parental perceptions.

The findings reveal that higher screen time is associated with concerns such as children's inability to regulate usage, excessive engagement with gaming and social media, and difficulties in responsible use. FILE PHOTO

Behavioural concerns

The findings revealed that higher screen time is strongly associated with concerns such as children's inability to regulate usage, excessive engagement with gaming and social media, and difficulties in responsible use. Parents also reported adverse effects on physical, psychological and social functioning.

"Parents are increasingly reporting difficulties in regulating their children's technology use, especially when it begins to interfere with sleep, studies and daily routines," said Rajesh Kumar, assistant professor of Clinical Psychology at NIMHANS and corresponding author.

Screen time was classified as high or low based on age-specific guidelines from global and Indian paediatric bodies. A significant proportion of children exceeded recommended limits, with higher exposure emerging as a key marker of parental concern.

Perceived loss of control was the most prominent issue, accounting for nearly half of responses. This included irritability when devices were removed and difficulty disengaging from screens. Other concerns included excessive gaming or social media use, inappropriate content exposure, and reduced attention span and academic performance, he said.

Patterns matter

Manoj Kumar Sharma, professor of Clinical Psychology and head of the SHUT Clinic, noted that problematic technology use is not defined by duration alone. "It is also about patterns such as loss of control, excessive engagement, and the extent to which it affects a child's functioning," he said.

The study also highlighted environmental influences. Children with access to multiple digital devices spent significantly more time on screens. Single-child households reported higher engagement, possibly reflecting greater reliance on digital media in the absence of sibling interaction, Dr. Sharma said.

With technology deeply embedded in daily life, children are exposed to screens from an early age. Devices such as smartphones, tablets and televisions are widely used for education, entertainment and behaviour management.

While digital tools can support learning and social interaction, excessive and poorly regulated use has been linked to sleep disturbances, reduced physical activity, attention problems, emotional dysregulation and peer relationship difficulties. Early, unregulated exposure may also affect language development, academic performance and social skills, he said.

Need for guidance

The researchers clarified that the study did not diagnose clinical addiction but captured parent-reported indicators that may signal emerging difficulties -important for early identification and prevention.

The parents expressed a clear need for support. More than half preferred practical, hands-on strategies to manage screen time, while others emphasised better communication, boundary-setting skills and improved digital literacy.

"There is a clear demand for structured guidance and skill-based interventions to help parents manage children's technology use in a balanced, developmentally appropriate way," Dr. Sharma said.

The findings underscore the need for parental psychoeducation and structured training programmes, particularly in low- and middle-income settings where formal guidance remains limited. Schools, paediatric services and community mental health systems could play a key role, Dr. Kumar added.

6-year-old girl abducted, murdered

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A six-year-old girl was allegedly abducted and murdered on the outskirts of Bengaluru, in the limits of the Electronics City Police Station.

The victim was the daughter of a labourer hailing from Assam. She resided with her parents in a shed near Vittasandra in Begur. Her father works as a scrap collector and also takes up housekeeping jobs in nearby apartments. According to the police, the child went missing on Thursday evening while playing near her residence. Despite frantic searches by her family and locals, she could not be traced. A missing complaint was lodged on Friday. Based on the complaint, the police launched a search operation. Later that night, the girl's body was found in a eucalyptus grove near Bolugutta. Preliminary investigation suggests that unidentified miscreants abducted the child, strangled her, and dumped the body in the isolated grove.

While sexual assault is suspected, only an autopsy report can confirm this, senior officials say. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

The body has been shifted to St. John's Medical College Hospital for a post-mortem, and efforts are under way to trace the accused. While the police suspect sexual assault, only an autopsy can confirm this, senior officials said.

Truck carrying LPG cylinders overturns

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Tension prevailed in Nandini Layout after a lorry carrying domestic gas cylinders overturned on Friday, triggering panic among locals.

The incident occurred when the truck loaded with domestic LPG cylinders lost control. Emergency response teams rushed to the spot immediately and took swift measures to ensure that there was no gas leakage. Their timely action helped avert a major mishap. The lorry driver sustained injuries. The accident also caused damage to the rear portion of a car nearby. Meanwhile, two two-wheeler riders had a miraculous escape. The CCTV footage showed that the riders narrowly escaped coming under the lorry as the vehicle overturned within seconds of their passing. A case has been registered.

KSRTC wins SKOCH award

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) has been conferred with the SKOCH National Award 2025 for its "Transparent Recruitment and Training Programme" at a ceremony held in New Delhi on Saturday.

The award recognises the corporation's efforts to ensure transparency and uniformity in its recruitment process by minimising human intervention, a release stated. The KSRTC has implemented a technology-driven system incorporating automated driving tests, online examinations, digital document verification, etc.

Five held for smuggling counterfeit cigarettes into Bengaluru through KIA

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The counterfeit cigarettes were allegedly imported from countries including Cambodia, Malaysia, and Singapore

The Kempegowda International Airport Police have busted an inter-State counterfeit cigarette racket operating through international routes and arrested five accused, including a father-son duo. Fake branded cigarettes worth approximately ₹50 lakh were seized during the operation.

This is the third case registered by the airport police in March this year. The accused have been identified as Abdul Bashid, a resident of HRBR Layout, his son Mohammad Ashiq, and their associates- Mohammad Anwar Ibrahim, Mohammad Atar Ansari, and Ghulam Hussain- all natives of Chennai. According to police, the counterfeit cigarettes were allegedly imported from countries including Cambodia, Malaysia, and Singapore at low prices and distributed across Bengaluru, Chennai, and Telangana for significant profits.

The operation was initiated following a complaint by N. Rajesh, a field executive, associated with ITC Ltd., regarding the circulation of counterfeit cigarettes under various brand names. Acting on specific intelligence, the police apprehended the accused on Saturday morning and recovered around 20 boxes of counterfeit cigarettes at the airport.

A case has been registered for copyright infringement. Officials said that such counterfeit products not only result in financial losses to legitimate companies but also pose serious health risks to consumers.

College day celebrated

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Jyothi Nivas College on Friday marked its 60th College Day on the Koramangala campus. Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, who attended the event as the chief guest, underscored the role of youth and education in nation building.

Principal Mary Louisa S. presented the annual report for 2025-26, highlighting academic achievements and initiatives.

Timings
BENGALURU

SUNDAY, MAR. 29	
RISE 06:18	SET 18:31
RISE 15:29	SET 03:35
MONDAY, MAR. 30	
RISE 06:17	SET 18:31
RISE 16:21	SET 04:16
TUESDAY, MAR. 31	
RISE 06:17	SET 18:31
RISE 17:11	SET 04:55

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	30	20
Mysuru	36	20
Bengaluru	36	20

Bengaluru Today
35°C The weather will be warm and uneasy. Night will be slight cool. Chances of light rain and thundershower.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
34°C Morning will be pleasant. Day will be warm. Night will be pleasant. Spell of light rain and thundershower with gusty winds to occur.

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THE HINDU
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PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the public at large that my client is intending to purchase the immovable property more fully described in the Schedule hereunder. Any person/s having any right, title, interest, claim or demand whatsoever in respect of the said property by way of sale, mortgage, lease, lien, charge, inheritance, gift, possession, easement or otherwise are hereby required to make the same known in writing, along with documentary proof, to the undersigned within 15 (fifteen) days from the date of publication of this notice.

If no such claims are received within the stipulated period, it shall be presumed that there are no claims whatsoever in respect of the said property and the proposed transaction will be completed, and any such claims, if any, shall be deemed to have been waived.

SCHEDULE OF PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of residential vacant site bearing New No. 85 (Old No. 29), PID No. 2146547651 (Old PID No. 98-43-85), carved out of converted land, situated in BBMP Ward No. 98 (Ganganagar), measuring East to West 60 feet and North to South 40 feet, totally measuring 2400 sq. ft., situated at 13th Main, Ganganagar North, Bangalore, together with all rights, appurtenances whatsoever, whether underneath or above the surface, and bounded on: East by: Road, West by: Site belonging to V. Bhaskar, North by: Property of K. Shyamraj, South by: Property of N. Subbaraj

Y.A. NAGARAJ, Advocate
No. 1, 2nd floor, 4th Main, Kumara Park West Road, Near Subramanya Temple Arch, Seshadripuram, Bangalore-560020.
Mob:9845795956, Date:28-03-2026

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

NOTICE FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (EOI) FOR EMPANELMENT

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites Expressions of Interest (EOI) for Empanelment of service providers for implementation of the reformed On- Board Service Policy.

The documents should be submitted in a sealed cover addressed to the office of **The Principal Chief Mechanical Engineer, 2nd Floor, Mechanical Department, Rail Soudha, Gadag road, Hubballi-580020**, either in person or by post.

Last date for Submission of Application :
Upto 18.00 hrs on 22.04.2026

For details log on : www.swr.indianrailways.gov.in

Deputy Chief Machanical Engineer/ Headquarter/,Hubballi
PUB/1034/AAD360/PRB/SWR/2025-26

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South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | @SWRAILWAYHQ | @sw_railways

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF FINANCE, DEPTT. OF FINANCIAL SERVICES
DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL - 2, BENGALURU
BSNL Building, 4th Floor, Telephone House, Rajbhavan Road, Bangalore - 560001.

RC No. : 1209 / 2019

Punjab National Bank
Branch Office at 1st Cross
Vidyanagar, B.H. Road, Tumkur - 572 103.
... Certificate Holder Bank

Versus

Smt. Shylaja S Shetty **... Certified Debtor / Defendants**

DEMAND NOTICE

1. Smt. Shylaja S Shetty W/o. Sri Shivarama Shetty
No. 4, 2nd Floor, 5th Cross, Chinnaswamy Pillai Road, Jaibharatnagar, Bengaluru - 560 033.
Also At : Smt. Shylaja S Shetty W/o. Sri Shivarama Shetty
No. 18, Ramakrishnappa Road, Cox Town, Bengaluru - 560 005.
2. Sri. Shivarama Shetty S/o. Sri. Chikkaiah Shetty
No. 4, 2nd Floor, 5th Cross, Chinnaswamy Pillai Road, Jaibharatnagar, Bengaluru - 560 033.
Also At : Sri. Shivarama Shetty S/o. Sri. Chikkaiah Shetty
No. 18, Ramakrishnappa Road, Cox Town, Bengaluru - 560 005.
... Certified Debtor / Defendants

In view of the Recovery Certificate issued in **T.A. No. 2014/2017** passed by the **Hon'ble Presiding Officer, DRT, Bangalore On Dated 20-04-2019 an Amount of Rs. 22,39,728/- (Rupees Twenty Two Lakh(s) Thirty Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty Eighty Only)** is due against you along with interest and costs from date failing of O.A.s till realization of the Recovery Certificate.

In addition to the sum aforesaid you will be liable to pay all charges and expenses incurred in respect of the service of this notice and other process that may be taken for recovering the amount due.

You are hereby called upon to deposit the amount within 15 days of the receipt of the notice, failing which the recovery shall be made as per rules.

Given under my hand and the seal of the Tribunal, on this **01st Day of July 2020.**

Recovery Officer - 1
Debts Recovery Tribunal - 2
Bangalore

Note : Attention is invited to Rule 16 of the Second Schedule of the Income Tax Act 1961 read with recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 which is reproduced below.

: "Rule 16(1) where a notice has been served on a defaulter under Rule 2, the defaulter or his representative or his representative in interest shall not be competent to mortgage, charge, lease or otherwise deal with any property belonging to him except with the permission of the Debts Recovery Officer, nor shall any civil court issue any process against such property in execution of a decree for the payment of money.

(2) Where an attachment has been made under this schedule any private transfer or delivery of the property attached or of any interest therein and any payment to the defaulter of any debt, dividend or other monies contrary to such attachment, shall be void, as against all claims enforceable under the attachment.

(3) You are also liable to disclose your assets both movable and immovable to this Tribunal along with the Income Tax Returns of last 5 year.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work:

E-Tender Notice No.Y/E.29/2025-26/104 Dated: 18-03-2026

Description of work	Approx. Value
(Re-Tender) 1) Enhancement of LHB / ICF coach maintenance facilities at Mysuru. 2) Ashokapuram - Construction of service rooms for C&W activities at AP station - Electrical arrangements.	Rs. 14,47,966.78

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 08-04-2026**

E-Tender Notice No.Y/E.29/2025-26/105 Dated: 18-03-2026

Description of work	Approx. Value
(Re-Tender) Provision of Roof Top Solar plants in major colonies over Mysuru Division.	Rs. 1,35,05,862.00

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 08-04-2026**

E-Tender Notice No.Y/E.29/2025-26/106 Dated: 18-03-2026

Description of work	Approx. Value
(Re-tender) 1) Provision of Dedicated DG sets for Service Buildings over Mysuru Division. 2) Replacement of over aged AC plants by star rated new AC plants in Service buildings in Mysuru, Hassan, Sakleshpur, Arsikere, Shivamogga Town, Chikjajur & Davangere stations/ depots.	Rs. 19,23,878.20

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 09-04-2026**

E-Tender Notice No.Y/E.29/2025-26/107 Dated: 20-03-2026

Description of work	Approx. Value
(Re-tender) Provision of Integrated power supply at 22 LC Gates, RTU for 15 Interlocked LC gates - Electrical arrangements.	Rs. 15,54,938.00

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 10-04-2026**

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer
PUB/1023/AAF/PRB/SWR/2025-26 **General / Mysuru**

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South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRAILWAYHQ | sw_railways

इंडियन बैंक Indian Bank
इलाहाबाद ALLAHABAD

HENNUR ROAD BRANCH

LOCKER BREAK OPEN NOTICE

The locker account mentioned below remains un-operated and dormant for past few years. The heirs has not responded to the notice issued by the bank from time to time and the Bank has not received any claim from the hirer or the legal heirs of the hirer. Under the circumstances we will be compelled to break open the said locker and notice is hereby issued, so that the concerned person / legal heirs shall approach the Branch with relevant documents on or before **05/04/2026**. During business hours for claiming/closing locker facility, failing which, we will be constrained to break open the locker mentioned below on or after **07/04/2026**.

Name and Address of Hirer as registered with the Bank	Locker Number	Locker Key Number
Mr. ABHILASH M C/o Muninjanappa, No. 233, Dham Enclave, Hennur-Bagalur Main Road, Near Sandar Rickets Public School, Kothanur, Bangalore-560007	06	26

Date: 18.03.2026
Place: Bangalore

Smt. Radhika V (SM)
Indian Bank, Hennur Road Branch

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சங்கீத மும்மூர்த்திகள்
SANGEETHA MUMMOORTHIGAL
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Concept : VSV
Music : Bombay Jayashri
Dialogues : CV Chandramohan & TV Varadharajen
Dramatisation & Direction : TV Varadharajen

Venue CHOWDIAH MEMORIAL HALL
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ISSN 0971 - 751X

BMRCL inks ₹40 cr. deal with Bagmane

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has signed a grant agreement with Bagmane Developers Pvt. Ltd. for financial participation in the construction of the DRDO Sports Complex Metro Station under Phase-2A of the metro project.

Under the agreement signed on Friday, the Bagmane Developers will contribute ₹40 crore towards the station on the Outer Ring Road (ORR) corridor, which connects Central Silk Board to K.R. Puram. Of this, ₹20 crore has already been remitted. The company will also support enhancements to the station's interior and external facade, according to a release. In return, the BMRCL will grant naming rights of the station to Bagmane Developers for a period of 20 years, subject to approval from the State government. The proposed name is "Bagmane DRDO Sports Complex Metro Station".

Participation model

Officials said the agreement follows a grant-based participation model, where the private partner contributes to capital expenditure during the construction phase. The rights are limited to naming, with no additional commercial or advertising entitlements.

The DRDO Sports Complex station is part of the 19.75-km ORR corridor comprising 17 stations, expected to ease congestion and improve sustainable urban mobility in Bengaluru.

Puppy adoption camp today

BENGALURU: The South City Corporation, Bengaluru, will host a puppy adoption camp at Shalini Grounds on Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The initiative encourages citizens to adopt Indian native dogs.

Man abducted in a case of mistaken identity, assaulted

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The accused, who was targeting a man identified as Nataraj alias Nata, abducted Sharath Krishne Gowda instead

Police are on the lookout for a gang, who, in a case of mistaken identity, abducted a man and assaulted him in broad daylight at Nagarahole Circle in the Byadarahalli police limits on March 24.

The accused, who were armed with lethal weapons and arrived in an autorickshaw, were reportedly targeting a man identified as Nataraj alias Nata. However, in a case of mistaken identity, they abducted Sharath Krishne Gowda, who was having tea with a friend at the spot. Despite Sharath insisting that he was not Nataraj, the gang allegedly assaulted him and forcibly bundled him into the autorickshaw before fleeing the scene. After the abduction, the accused reportedly used Sharath's mobile phone to call his sister and verbally abused. Sources said the gang later checked the victim's phone and realised he was not the person they were looking for. They subsequently released him midway and fled.

Trauma

Sharath, who was left traumatised by the ordeal, has lodged a complaint at the Byadarahalli Police Station.

An FIR has been registered, and the police have launched a manhunt to trace and arrest the accused. The police have registered a case of assault. The entire act was captured by a passer-by, and the video went viral on social media, causing public outcry.

In his complaint, Sharath stated he was standing near a roadside tea stall along with his friend Chintan when three unknown persons approached them. One of the accused enquired if he was "Nata". Sharath clarified that he was not Nata, but the accused allegedly accused him of being the son of a person named Nataraj and suddenly assaulted him. The attackers then forcibly dragged him into a nearby passenger autorickshaw and allegedly assaulted him. One of the accused was said to have taken out a knife and used its blunt side to hit the victim on his shoulder, legs, and other parts, causing injuries that bled.

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- M. Sc. in Chemistry (Organic) | Data Science
- Master of Performing Arts

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West corporation presents budget with largest outlay among the five

A key governance reform proposed is the digitisation of property-related services; traffic, urban mobility improvements form a major part of budget

Rishita Khanna
BENGALURU

(From left): Additional Commissioner (Revenue) J. Manjunath Swamy, West corporation Commissioner K.V. Rajendra, GBA Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao, and Deputy Controller of Finance Department, GBA, Shekhar, during the 2026-27 budget presentation in Bengaluru on Saturday. SUDHAKARA JAIN

With a focus on mobility, digital governance, solid waste management, healthcare upgrades, and revenue generation, the West City Corporation on Saturday presented its maiden budget for 2026-27, pegging total receipts at ₹4,732.81 crore and expenditure at ₹4,732.73 crore. This is said to be the largest outlay among the five corporations.

Commissioner K.V. Rajendra, who presented the budget, outlined a range of measures aimed at improving civic infrastructure while expanding non-tax revenue streams. Of the total receipts, ₹2,541.73 crore is expected from revenue sources, along with ₹200 crore through loans.

A key governance reform proposed is the digitisation of property-related services. The corporation will introduce an online system allowing citizens to submit documents and obtain new khatas for their properties, which are expected to generate ₹18 crore in revenue. Moreover, QR codes will be installed on road nameplates to provide information about local officials and civic staff. Further, a dedicated TDR Exchange Cell will be established to streamline the transfer of development rights. The corporation is also introducing new revenue and efficiency measures, including tender-based parking systems with a focus on electric vehicle parking.

Traffic and urban mobility improvements form a major part of the budget.

Special projects based on transit-oriented development are proposed at Goraguntepalya, with ₹2 crore allocated for footpaths, feeder bus services, parking, and road widening. A total of 174.49 km of ward roads will be developed at a cost of ₹317.25 crore. The corporation also plans to procure 10 towing vehicles to improve traffic enforcement.

Environment

For the sanitation, ₹300 crore has been allocated for solid waste management, alongside ₹25 crore to deploy one mechanical sweeper per Assembly constituency. Ten transfer stations- one in each constituency- have also been proposed to streamline waste handling.

The corporation has announced the creation of cycle tracks in at least five locations per division, including around Nayandahalli Lake. It plans to install rooftop solar systems at five human crematoriums and one animal crematorium to reduce electricity consumption.

The corporation will establish specially-abled-friendly parks and pet parks across divisions, along with libraries for senior citizens. One park in each Assembly constituency will be converted into a pet-friendly space, and at least one ward per constituency will be developed as a model ward for animal husbandry activities.

Education and Health

In education, ₹44.35 crore has been allocated, including ₹1 crore each to convert five selected schools into smart schools. The corporation has also partnered with an NGO to conduct health check-ups, distribute medicines and sanitary napkins, and build toilets for school students. The earlier one-day educational tour will be replaced with a three-day 'Karnataka Darshana' tour covering historical sites.

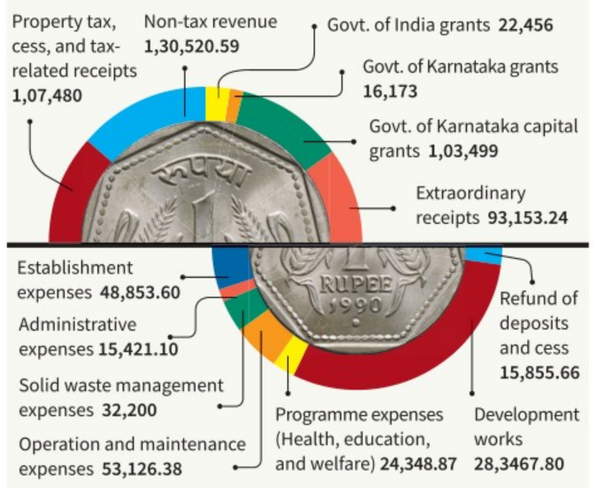
Healthcare services have received a boost, with six of the 15 corporation-run hospitals to be upgraded under the Brand Bengaluru initiative at a cost of ₹95.73 crore. A central clinical command centre will be established in Sadashivanagar along with 28 Smart Virtual Clinics, with plans to expand to 20 more at an additional cost of ₹4 crore.

The corporation also plans to rejuvenate the Dr. Rajkumar Auditorium under a Public Private Partnership model. Auditoriums across all Assembly constituencies will also be upgraded with modern sound and lighting systems, improved seating, and essential facilities, to make them hubs for art, literature, and community programmes.

The initiative is aimed at providing a platform for local talent, support the preservation of cultural heritage, and generate additional revenue for the corporation.

West corporation

Where the rupee comes

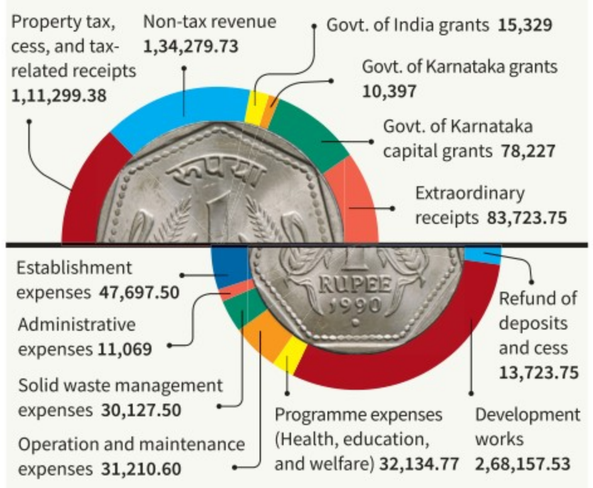


Where the rupee goes

- Provision to register new khata for distribution of e-documents for public land properties
- Plans proposed for **50 skywalks**
- New initiative through **e-Swathu** application for approval for single site plans
- One sweeping machine per Assembly constituency on rental basis
- **100 Miyawaki** forests
- **Rainwater harvesting** unit in **20 parks at ₹10 lakh** each

North corporation

Where the rupee comes

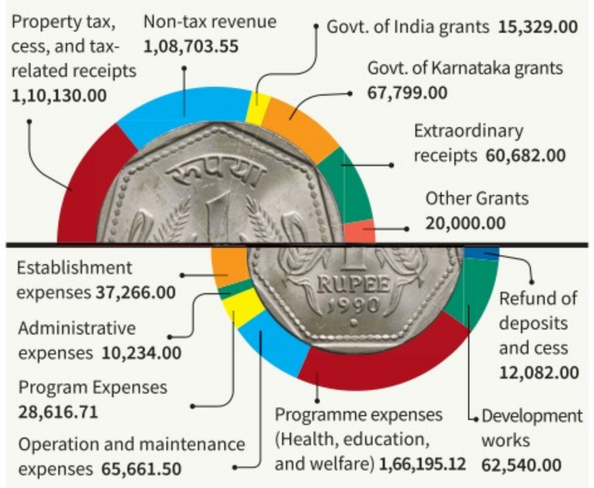


Where the rupee goes

- **8 transfer** stations will be constructed for better waste management
- Banaswadi Lake, Lingarajapura Lake, and Ramachandrapura Lake will be rejuvenated
- **200 rainwater harvesting** pits will be constructed in parks across the corporation
- **"Akka Cafe"** and **"Cafe Sanjeevini"** at a cost of **₹27 lakh**
- Modern slaughterhouse will be constructed to ensure a healthy supply of meat products at a cost of **₹14 crore**

South corporation

Where the rupee comes



Where the rupee goes

- **South City Corporation** building in front of Banashankari Temple
- **₹433 crore** for road upgrades, key corridor widening (Bannerghatta, Subramanyapura, Begur roads), plus **18 skywalks** and **smart parking**
- Formation of **72 wards** with local ward offices to improve service delivery and quicker grievance redressal
- A **₹32 crore** barrier-free skywalk to connect Banashankari Temple, Metro Station, and TTMC in coordination with BMRCL
- Begur and Madiwala lakes are proposed to be developed for tourism, with pilot boating facilities introduced under a PPP model

North corporation, projected to be the poorest, comes out with a big outlay

Chetan B.C.
BENGALURU

The corporation also estimates a whopping ₹680 crore from B-Khata to A-Khata conversion fees and ₹420 crore from Premium FAR

Bengaluru North City Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar presented the corporation's first annual budget with a total outlay of ₹4,342.20 crore, prioritising infrastructure, health, and environment. This is the second biggest outlay among all the five corporations.

Given the corporation was projected to have the lowest property tax income base among the five corporations, it presenting a budget with an outlay bigger than the East Corporation that was projected to be the richest, has raised eyebrows. Though the large outlay is made possible by grants from the State and Union governments to the tune of ₹1039.53 crore, the corporation's own revenues make up for three-fourths of the outlay.

Property tax collection

While the Brand Bengaluru Committee estimated a property tax collection potential of ₹540 crore based on previous year's collection, the corporation estimates it at ₹826.25 crore, which including cess and other related fees go up to ₹1112.99 crore.

The corporation also estimates a whopping ₹680 crore from B-Khata to A-Khata conversion fees and ₹420 crore from Premium FAR. In a bid to curb unauthorised advertising and flexes, the corporation has decided to impose a fine of twice the tendered amount. To boost revenue, the corporation has proposed on-street and off-street parking, with an expected revenue of ₹6 crore.

Road-widening facilities

Much like the East and Central Corporations, the North Corporation also wants to revive road-widening projects. It has earmarked ₹17 crore for land acquisition for infrastructure projects to give a push to road-widening works. A 61.7% of budget outlay is allocated for infrastructure development. For ward-level development, the commissioner has allocated ₹2.25 crore per ward. Further, ₹10 crore has been allocated for the maintenance of storm-water drains. In a bid to address the garbage issue, which remains a major problem in the region, the corporation has also allocated over ₹290 crore for Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML). Further, it has allocated ₹12 crore for purchasing sweeping machines and ₹5 crore for litter-picking machines. It also plans to convert green waste into compost and sell it for ₹150 per kg.

Further, the corporation has allocated ₹40 crore for developing four lakes. Among them, Srinivaspura Lake and Mallasandra Gudde Lake will be developed comprehensively. Besides, the corporation has proposed reviving currently non-functional lakes, including Banaswadi Lake, Lingarajapura Lake, and Ramachandrapura Lake. The corporation has also proposed starting boating activities in lakes in its jurisdiction. Further, ₹20 crore has been allocated for undertaking works related to the climate action plan.

Housing

Commissioner Mr. Kumar said that they have earmarked ₹71.07 crore for housing scheme, of which 50% would be for the single house scheme and the rest 50% to provide houses through the Rajiv Gandhi Housing Scheme. The corporation has also allocated ₹7.7 crore for establishing vending zones and providing e-vending vehicles to street vendors.

Further, ₹1 crore has been allocated to provide financial assistance to athletes participating in national and international sports.

The budget also earmarks ₹73 lakh for the welfare of the transgender community, with the objective of providing one-time financial assistance of up to ₹50,000 to help them become self-reliant and pursue employment.

South corporation budget focuses on infra push with ₹3,826 crore outlay

Darshan Devaiah B.P.
BENGALURU

The Bengaluru South City Corporation budget was presented on Saturday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Bengaluru South City Corporation presented its budget for 2026-27 on Saturday, with Commissioner Ramesh K.N. outlining a roadmap focused on decentralised governance, infrastructure expansion, revenue augmentation, and citizen welfare.

To strengthen financial oversight, a special vigilance squad will be formed to detect tax evasion and illegal constructions, while a high-level expert committee will guide urban development strategies, according to the budget. On the revenue front, the corporation aims to generate ₹126 crore through a new advertisement policy, while ensuring no increase in property tax, which is projected to yield ₹1,101.3 crore.

Additionally, conversion of 'B-Khata' to 'A-Khata' properties is expected to bring in ₹225 crore, supported by full digitisation of property records.

A smart parking system is set to be introduced, generating an estimated ₹40 crore annually. For mobility and infrastructure, ₹50.45 crore has been earmarked for land acquisition, with major road projects including Bannerghatta Road redevelopment and widening of key corridors such as Subramanyapura Road and Begur Main Road. In urban planning, ₹5 crore has been allocated for a Comprehensive Master Plan, while building approvals and Premium FAR are expected to generate ₹382 crore and ₹360 crore respectively.

Major focus

Infrastructure development remains a major focus, with ₹433 crore earmarked for road upgrades and ₹162 crore allocated for ward-level works.

South Bengaluru, which consists of 59 living lakes, will see phased development of the lakes and introduction of treated water supply systems. It is proposed to utilise the treated excess water from the residential apartment complexes to fill up surrounding lakes in accordance with the standards prescribed by the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB).

The budget states that Begur and Madiwala lakes will be developed from a tourism perspective.

It is proposed to introduce boating facilities in these two lakes on a pilot basis under the Public Private Partnership model.

In the social sector, ₹260.67 crore has been earmarked for welfare programmes, including housing subsidies, education support, and livelihood schemes. Financial assistance for housing alone accounts for ₹88.25 crore and the regularisation of 1,929 pourakarmikas.

The South City Corporation estimates that total receipts are worth ₹3,826.43 crore against an expenditure of ₹3,825.95 crore, resulting in a marginal surplus of ₹48.21 lakh. Revenue from own sources is pegged at ₹2,795.15 crore, while grants from the Union and State governments are expected to contribute ₹927.31 crore.

B-SMILE corners 14% of 5 civic budgets' outlay

Part of the funds will go to major infrastructure works; major chunk will go towards repaying loans raised by B-SMILE to fund tunnel roads

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Bengaluru Smart Infrastructure Limited (B-SMILE), a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) set up by the State government to execute large-scale infrastructure projects such as the twin tunnel road and elevated corridors, has cornered ₹2840.55 crore, 14% of the total outlay of all five corporation budgets – ₹20217.66 crore.

While a part of these funds will fund major infrastructure works in the city, a major chunk will go towards repaying loans raised by the SPV to fund tunnel roads.

B-SMILE cornered ₹2840.55 crore. GETTY IMAGES

Under the erstwhile Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), BSMILE had submitted an undertaking to Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) – which gave a loan of over ₹19,000 crore for tunnel road phase 1 – that advertisement and premium Floor Area Ratio (FAR) revenue from the city will be credited into an escrow account towards repayment of the loan.

While the other corporations will transfer portions of their premium FAR and advertisement revenues to B-SMILE, the West City corporation will not do so. Instead, it will transfer ₹635.5 crore for works within the corporation under the Sugama Sanchara Bengaluru initiative as part of the Brand Bengaluru programme.

Both North and South corporations will transfer their full revenue from ads and Premium FAR to B-SMILE.

While the other corporations will transfer portions of their premium Floor Area Ratio and ad revenues to B-SMILE, the West corporation will not do so

The North corporation will transfer ₹420 crore from premium FAR revenues, ₹54 crore from advertisement fees, and an additional ₹139.4 crore towards Sugama Sanchara Bengaluru.

Similarly, the South corporation will contribute ₹360 crore from premium FAR and ₹126 crore from advertisement revenue, along with ₹139.4 crore earmarked for Sugama Sanchara Bengaluru.

The East orporation has projected ₹120 crore from advertisement revenues and ₹600 crore from premium FAR, transferring the entire amount to B-SMILE.

The Central City corporation will transfer 50% of its revenue from these sources – ₹71.25 crore from advertisement fees and ₹175 crore from premium FAR – to the SPV.

Both East and Central corporations will not contribute to B-SMILE for their own works under the Sugama Sanchara Bengaluru initiative.

Contributions to B-SMILE

- **North** **₹420 crore** from premium (Floor Area Ratio) FAR revenues, ₹54 crore from advertisement fee, ₹139.4 crore for Sugama Sanchara Bengaluru
- **South** **₹360 crore** from premium FAR, ₹126 crore from ad revenue, ₹139.4 crore for Sugama Sanchara Bengaluru
- **East: ₹120 crore** from ad revenue, ₹600 crore from premium FAR
- **Central: ₹71.25 crore** from ad revenue and ₹175 crore from premium FAR
- **West: ₹635.5 crore** for Sugama Sanchara Bengaluru only

Total : ₹2,840.55 crore

Infrastructure changes

CENTRAL
- To develop its website
- Urban Design Cell, comprising an urban transport expert, an urban designer, and an urban planner (also in East, North corporation)
- Litter picker machines, manually operated sweeping units, along with compact mechanical sweepers for dense market areas at a cost of ₹10 crore
- 20 dedicated SHE Toilets, 60 new public toilets for men, women, and the disabled

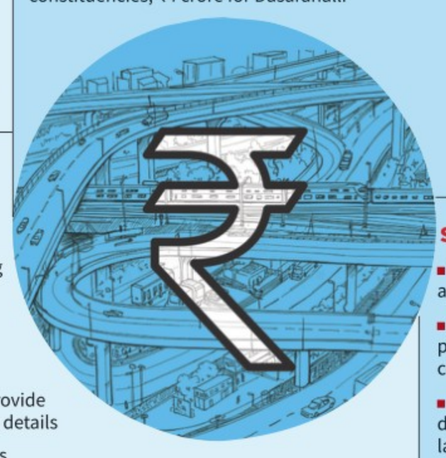
EAST
- ₹25 crore for corporation's own building
- Legal cell for managing legal matters, with an allocation of ₹4.5 crore
- An e-Office system across all departments
- Public dashboard to provide project and expenditure details
- Two new shelter homes for homeless, upgradation of existing six facilities
- Construction of electric crematorium at a cost of ₹5 crore, repairing Panathur electric crematorium at a cost of ₹1 crore
- 15 PHCs and 10 Namma Clinics to come up at a cost of ₹35 crore
- A dog shelter for 500 stray dogs at ₹12 crore

A state-of-the-art ABC centre at a cost of ₹4 crore in Mahadevapura

Animal crematorium to come up at a cost of ₹2 crore

In a first, mobile veterinary vehicle for livestock treatment at a cost of ₹50 lakh

WEST
- 10 transfer stations, one for each Assembly constituency
- Health check-ups, medicines, sanitary napkins, and new toilets for primary and high school students in collaboration with NGO
- Five schools to be converted into 'smart schools' at a cost of ₹1 crore
- Environmental-friendly digital libraries within each zone of the corporation
- For development work, ₹5 crore each to Malleswaram and Rajarajeshwari Nagar Assembly constituencies, ₹4 crore for Dasarahalli



NORTH
- Auto DCR Software to provide approvals through the Online Building Plan System
- Files and records to be digitised
- ₹6 crore to develop software for corporation administration, website to be developed
- Dialysis services extended to Sanjaynagar and Mallasandra dialysis centres
- ₹3 crore for ABC surgery on 12,000 street dogs

SOUTH
- Paperless administration
- New smart parking system for commercial areas
- Action plan for faster disposal of cases under land acquisition
- Website to be developed
- Feasibility studies for the construction of grade separators at major junctions
- Treated excess water from residential apartment complexes to fill surrounding lakes

With the number of wards increasing from 198 to 369 following the formation of the Greater Bengaluru Authority, each ward is expected to have a dedicated ward-level office.

However, barring the South City Corporation, none of the other corporations has made any mention of this in their maiden budgets. Similarly, while there is a provision for one Indira Canteen per ward, the budgets largely focused on the maintenance of existing canteens, with no clarity on plans to expand their numbers in line with the increased ward count

Green initiatives

CENTRAL
- ₹10 crore to construct Blue-Green Corridors on selected roads, featuring bioswales, tree planting
- Pay-and-use EV charging points, dedicated bicycle tracks, and pedestrian-friendly walkways under the Carbon Credit scheme
- Introduction of policy mandating the installation of EV charging facilities in all apartment complexes
- Master plan to beautify the spaces beneath flyovers, with emphasis on eco-friendly landscapes by planting bamboo saplings
- ₹11.5 crore for tree canopy development, ₹3.5 crore to plant 50,000 roadside saplings

EAST
- ₹10 crore for the establishment of new nursery centres under the 'Brand Bengaluru' or 'Green Bengaluru' initiative
- ₹10 crore for annual maintenance of parks and construction of 35 soaking pits to augment the groundwater level in parks
- Steps to be taken to develop new Miyawaki forests to expand green cover
- Through lake rejuvenation, decentralised drainage systems, improved storm-water drains, and urban afforestation, the 'Sponge City' model will be implemented at ₹3.5 crore
- The 'Community Involvement for Lake Conservation Policy–2024' will be implemented; ₹25 crore has been allocated for the development of 4 lakes
- ₹10 crore for 54 parks under Mahadevapura and K.R. Puram
- In collaboration with BMRCL and K-RIDE, a plantation drive of approximately 25,000 saplings to be undertaken

WEST
- Development of Miyawaki forest at a cost of ₹1 crore
- Pay-and-use EV charging points in offices, on grounds, and at municipal properties of the corporation
- At least one specially-abled friendly park and pet park per division
- Rainwater harvesting units in 20 parks, each unit at a cost of ₹10 lakh
- Cycle tracks in at least five locations per department around Nayandahalli Lake
- Comprehensive development of Anjaneya Temple Park, UAS Park, Kuvempu Park, and Kirloskar Colony Park at ₹5 crore

SOUTH
- Establishment of special 'Smruti Van' (Memorial Forest) with priority to trees with medicinal value
- Creation of Sponge Parks to absorb excess rainwater and reduce urban flooding, proposed at a cost of ₹2 crore
- 200 groundwater recharge pits using CSR funds
- A software application will be developed for the public to report hazardous trees

NORTH
- ₹1,051 lakh allocated under the slogan 'Green is Life' for comprehensive management of trees, wildlife conservation, and forest activities
- ₹30 lakh for tree census
- 200 rainwater harvesting pits
- Comprehensive development of Srinivasapura Lake and Mallasandra Gudde Lake

From Page One

As announced in the State Budget, all five corporations have proposed to raise ₹200 crore each by issuing municipal bonds. FILE PHOTO

5 corporations present budgets with total outlay of ₹20,217.66 cr.

All five corporations have announced reform measures like using Artificial Intelligence, GIS mapping, among others, to bring defaulters to book, to increase their revenue base.

Only the Central City corporation has added a new tax – 2% of stamp duty for new khatas, the rest have only vowed to improve efficiency in tax collection and imposed no new taxes. As announced in the State Budget, all five corporations have proposed to raise ₹200 crore each by issuing municipal bonds.

Only the Central City corporation has added a new tax-2% of stamp duty for new khatas

Bengaluru Smart Infrastructure Limited (B-SMILE), the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) tasked with big ticket infrastructure works including tunnel roads in the city, will corner 14% of the total outlay of all the five corporations.

The corporations will divert part of revenues from advertisement and Premium FAR to B-SMILE apart from grant-in-aid for carrying out infrastructure works in their corporation limits.

All the five corporations have proposed to revive road-widening projects and have set aside funds for land acquisition costs. Many of these projects have been long pending and had failed to take off under erstwhile BBMP, as landowners refused compensation through Transferable Development Rights.

Now too, the corporations plan to compensate land owners through TDR and it is to be seen how successful they will be. All five corporations have also focused on pedestrian facilities, with each of them setting targets for length of footpaths to be revamped this year and adding skywalks.

The South corporation has proposed 18 skywalks under the public-private partnership model. FILE PHOTO

Pedestrian infra gets priority in 3 budgets

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Cycle tracks are planned in at least five locations in each division, including around Nayandahalli Lake

Amid concerns over poor pedestrian infrastructure in Bengaluru, the city's three civic corporations – South, West and North – which presented their maiden budgets on Saturday, have prioritised pedestrian infrastructure and non-motorised mobility.

The key highlight in the South corporation budget is a barrier-free elevated skywalk connecting Banashankari Temple, Metro Station, and a Traffic and Transit Management Centre, estimated to cost ₹32 crore. In addition, the corporation has proposed 18 skywalks under the public-private partnership (PPP) model.

An allocation of ₹50 crore has been earmarked for skywalk construction, pedestrian pathway upgrades and junction improvements.

The South corporation has also outlined plans to develop non-motorised transport (NMT) corridors, integrating footpaths, cycling lanes and safe pedestrian crossings.

The West corporation has proposed an even larger network of skywalks, with plans to construct them at 50 locations, leveraging advertisement-based revenue models. It has also allocated ₹50 crore for skywalks, footpath upgrades, and junction development. Additionally, cycle tracks are planned in at least five locations in each division, including around Nayandahalli Lake.

The North corporation has allocated ₹18 crore for the repair and reconstruction of nearly 1,000 km of footpaths across wards at ₹25 lakh per ward. Another ₹50 crore has been set aside for skywalk construction and pedestrian junction improvements.

East and Central corporations too focus on footpaths, skywalks

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

While the East corporation has set a target of developing 100 km of footpaths this year, the Central corporation has set a target of 50 km

Pedestrian safety and facilities have found welcome focus in the maiden budgets presented by the Central and East City corporations on Friday. While the east corporation has set a target of developing 100 km of footpaths this year, the central corporation has set a target of 50 km. Apart from these, budgets focus on building skywalks and junction improvements, with a key focus on pedestrian safety.

The Central corporation has announced a 'Hejje Hejjege Surakshe' initiative, under which 50 km of existing footpaths will be improved, and 15 km of new, modern footpaths will be constructed, with features such as rainwater absorption and accessibility for the elderly and persons with disabilities. Alongside this, 12 major junctions will be upgraded under the 'Suraksha' scheme, with a combined allocation of ₹50 crore that covers the installation of High-Rise Pedestrian Crossings (HRPCs). The corporation currently has 24 operational pedestrian skywalks and has initiated tenders for nine additional skywalks based on traffic police inputs.

In the East City corporation budget, pedestrian infrastructure has similarly been prioritised. For pedestrian-friendly initiatives, ₹50 crore has been earmarked for junction improvements, skywalks, and related works on major roads, alongside a target to develop 100 km of footpaths. Additionally, as announced in the state budget recently, footpath development along a 9 km stretch of the metro viaduct on ORR is planned under ORRCA sponsorship at a cost of ₹160 crore. Supporting urban safety and visibility, ₹38 crore has been set aside for converting sodium vapour streetlights to LED, along with ₹17 crore for their annual maintenance.

Push for road widening, upgrades across corporations in budgets

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The North corporation has planned a road-widening project across 30.5 km, covering 12 roads

The South, West, and North City corporations on Saturday unveiled a set of road infrastructure projects in their 2026-27 budgets, with a focus on road widening, junction improvements, and large-scale upgrades aimed at easing congestion and improving mobility.

In the South corporation, an allocation of ₹50.45 crore has been earmarked for land acquisition linked to road widening, grade separators, and junction development. Among the major projects, Bannerghatta Road, from Dairy Circle to NICE Road, is set to be developed during the financial year.

Key widening works include the Subramanyapura Road stretch from Banashankari Temple to Outer Ring Road (₹20 crore) and the Begur Main Road to Begur Koppa Road corridor (₹40 crore). In addition, ₹50 crore has been specifically allocated for widening roads identified under the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP).

Apart from a focus on road widening, the corporations' budgets also prioritise junction improvements and large-scale upgrades aimed at easing congestion and improving mobility. FILE PHOTO

The South corporation has also proposed ₹433 crore for large-scale upgradation of arterial, sub-arterial, and ward roads under various schemes, focusing on scientific asphalting, integrated drainage and junction improvements. Plans for grade separators at Jayanagar Raghavendra Swamy Temple Junction and Vega City Junction have also been outlined in the budget.

The West corporation has outlined extensive road widening projects, with ₹20 crore earmarked for land acquisition and ₹8 crore for widening key roads. Several corridors, including Ittamadu Road, Kurubarahalli Main Road, Mahalaxmipur Access Road, and Thyagarajanagar Main Road, are set to be widened significantly, doubling carriageway width in some cases.

A separate ₹2 crore has been earmarked for widening at the congested Goraguntepalya Junction on Tumkur Road.

The corporation allocated ₹667.74 crore for arterial and sub-arterial road development, and ₹317.25 crore for developing 174.49 km of ward roads.

Meanwhile, the North corporation has planned a road widening project across 30.5 km, covering 12 roads under RMP-2015. Works on 22.5 km across eight roads, including Tannery Road, Bagalur Main Road, and Jakkur Double Road, are set for completion, while new widening of 7.95 km across four roads such as Hennur-Bagalur Road and Dasarahalli Main Road has been proposed with ₹25 crore allocation, the North corporation budget states.

It has also committed significant investments in road development, including over ₹670 crore for ward, main and arterial roads, alongside dedicated ward-level allocations for pothole filling, traffic works and maintenance.

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Hindu DKV 31/156 Mutal Divorced (No Kids) MBBS, MD (Patho) Coimbatore based Working in Pvt Medical College Hospital 14 Lacs p.a seeks suitable groom (CNB) Doctor or any Professionals. CT: 9894371444

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THE HINDU
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Doing MS Opthal in Chennai Fair & good-looking girl from doctor family. Seeking MS/ MD Bridegroom from Nanjil Vellalar/ Vellalar Sub caste.
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87781 88699 / 95979 91002

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EZHAVA GIRL, TVM, Bharani, 31, B.Tech Mechanical, Civil Service Aspirant & teaching faculty. 9495594765.

HINDU EZHAVA lady Doctor 31/160 working in Germany invites suitable matrimonial proposal. 9496965983

NRI

NRI GROOM wanted-Nair girl, 52, Msc PhD, Scientist, never married, US ctzn Chicago.Malayalam/Tamil US residing boys only contact: 9895824803

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CHRISTIAN, DOCTOR, 38 Years Unmarried, Well Settled Family. Seeks Unmarried Doctor Groom. Ct: 7550286805

CSI CHRISTIAN, 35/154, Fair, MBBS., MD Govt. Doctor Girl Chennai, Seeks well placed Protestant Christian Groom. Contact:84382 78915

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MUSLIM, 35, M.Tech, 20 lakhs. Ph: 8137001257

CHRISTIAN, RC NADAR, 23, BDS, Upper middle class. Ph: 7356483111

✔ **MUSLIM GIRL 39 well mannered seeks educated, employed, unmarried Tamil Muslim groom. 9444235779**

CHRISTIAN, 28, B.Tech, Govt. job, 30 lakhs, NRI. Ph: 8137001253.

CHRISTIAN, 28, Fair, Upper middle class, MD, Doctor. Ph: 8138900312

MUDALIAR DIVORCE, 30, BE, 160cm Good–looking Well settled family Seeks Groom CNB. 8778514465/ 7200866346

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GROOM WANTED Hindu Nadar 31yrs MBBS, MS, Elite business family Ph:9841329471 / 9380791999

GROOM WANTED Rich Mudaliyar, 24yrs,B.Tech, Own promoters in Chennai Ph:6385293227

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Hindu Girl only Daughter Very Rich Beautiful 28 innocent Divorcee No Child. Boy should be Hindu below 33 from Elite Government Service or Professional or Rich Business Family preferably from TN. Divorcee Widower or First Marriage Caste No Bar. Send all details to 8081104364 (WhatsApp only) No Brokers

PILLAI VEG 41/172cm CEO Pvt London –Parents Chennai seeks UK Professionals /willing to go to UK CNB Geetham 9884858014

HINDU, 23, Canada, Private, ME, Canada, 80 lakhs. Ph: 8138009235.

WE ARE looking for an alliance for our daughter, aged 30 years, residing in Chennai, height 162cm, MBBS, MHA, Aesthetic Medicine, Hindu, Agamudayar, working in a reputed hospital at Chennai as an Administrator. Kumbam–Sadhayam. Looking for Doctor or well settled business back ground groom. Contact 9739070404 / 9282226820 / archdivyagsr@gmail.com

HINDU, DIVORCED, no kids, 32, BE. Ph: 8137003550

HINDU, 26, Mudaliar, Doctor, BSMS, looking for same community. Ph: 8137003549

PQM FOR (US Citizen) beautiful girl 2001/177 cm, JD/MBA vegetarian, seeking progressive tall match (182 cm), Hindu, US citizen North East based. Parents well settled Tamil Brahmins. E: mail@gurumyth7064@gmail.com with pics/ details.

TAMIL

GROOM WANTED Hindu Nadar,25yrs, BE,SWE,1.5L pm, business family Ph:9841329471,9380791999

GROOM WANTED SC (AD), 28yrs,CA, Affluent business family in Chennai Ph: 6369113665

GROOM WANTED CNB, 27yrs, MBA, Well Educated background in Chennai Ph: 9962791888

HINDU SC PR, 38 years/153cm, MSc, Viruchigam, Anusham, Seeks suitable Groom, Ct 8754564807

HINDU, DKV, Er., 26y, April, 154cm/45kg M.Tech, Bosch, Research Er.,1L/pm, eql. Edu & physical status. 98432 24626 / 7598384241

HINDU GIRL 28 yrs Fair Slim BE MS 5 yrs MNC Exp. Working in Bangalore seeks Professional Groom 9444000654

MUDALIAR 24/160 Beautiful, BE, MBA, AM, HCL,1000000.PA, Well Settled Family, CNB. 9043991629, 9043987029

PILLAI 28/162 MS Engineer Bangalore seeks Smart High professional Abroad Ok CNB Geetham 9884858014

GROOM WANTED vokkaliga Gounder, 27yrs MBA,well educated family seeks alliance from Gounder/ Mudaliyar business/ IT in Chennai. 9380791999

BRIDES WANTED

COSMOPOLITAN

EDUCATED BRIDE –35 for Groom RC, Software Engineer,43, Chennai,5ft 8inches /72Kg Never Married, Handsome, Teetotaler Ct.9841293531 / antonbr144@gmail.com

SMART, CHRISTIAN 31, 180cm, enterprising, UK–educated professional. Seeks compatible bride. Religion/ community no bar. Call/WA 9345 634 365

US–RETURNED MS(USA) 33/6ft. FC Reddiar (CNB). Handsome Sr. Manager, Global MNC, Chennai. Well–settled, rooted in values. Divorced (legally closed). PARENTS INVITE PROPOSALS. WhatsApp biodata+ pics: 86374–66522

KARKATHAR PILLAI 37, 170 cm, fair and handsome, BE (Telecom), Officer Indian Army IT Branch, 30 lacs PA, never married, son of retd army officer looking for affable and well educated girl. Equal and sub caste no bar. 9448307862.

36 YRS, B.Tech mgr govt Bank salary 1.5 LPM owning properties in Ch, Seeking alliance CNB. 9940507235

DOCTOR

SC VANNIAR 31/167 super specialist Doctor Trauma Surgeon JIPMER/ AIIMS Delhi well mannered, seeks suitable Doctor bride. Ct: 9445252124

VISWABRAHMIN BOY, born and brought up in Dubai (37) working in UK as Ortho Surgeon, British citizen, looking girls working in UK. Doctors only. Call: 9061084070.

VANNIYAR KULA Kshatriyar MD, 25. Seeks MBBS, MD Bride from Hindu Family. Contact: 9445644311

Hindu AD(PR), Fair, 30/158cm, MD, Rich, well settled at Chennai seeks Doctor/IAS/Group1 officers bride whatsapp: 8838254477

30 Years, Chennai based General Surgery Doctor Employed seeks Hindu Doctor Bride from broad minded, Educated Family with Traditional Values Contact 63822 63314

ENGLISH

IIT Educated Brahmin boy 35/178 settled in Mangalore working in ONGC seeks bride. MP UP Locals preferred. Ct : 7906537840

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ELITE BRIDES WANTED

BRAHMIN, 35, 180 cms, B.Tech, Businessman. Lives in Dubai. Parents are working professionals. Looking for a suitable match from any Brahmin community ready to relocate to Dubai. Contact: 6366448343

KONGU VELLALAR GOUNDER, 26, 183 cms, BE, Family Business. Family is financially well off. Looking for a like minded match from similar caste. Contact: 6366448344

NAIDU, 29, 175 cms, Businessman, MBA from US. Parents are Entrepreneurs. Family is financially well off. Looking for a like minded match from Business class from any metros from South India. Contact: 6366448344

ELITE GROOMS WANTED

BRAHMIN, 33, 168 cms, Masters in Journalism, Freelancer. Lives in US. Father is a Businessman. Looking for a like minded match from equivalent from the US. Contact: 6366448343

MUDALIYAR, 29, 163 cms, Business Administration. Lives in US. Business class family with a good net worth. Looking for a suitable match from similar community from US. Contact: 6366448343

MUDALIYAR, 29, 163 cms, Business Administration. Lives in US. Business class family. Looking for a suitable match from equivalent community from US. Contact: 6366448343

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TAMIL

GROOM WANTED Hindu Nadar 36yrs, B.tech, MBA working in SWE 2Lp/m, divorce educated family Ph:. 9841329471 / ,9380791999

ARCOT THULUVA Velalar Mudaliyar BDS 34 Years Well Settled Family Chennai CT : 6382232024 / 9486531194

MD OR MS Doctor Groom around 35 For 35 yrs MD Doctor Vannier Divorcee attached to her Family Hospital Dharmapuri. Caste No Bar. Contact: 9176328636 / 9443262064

RICH NAIDU 33yrs, BE, MBA, Industrial background in Chennai Ph:6369113665

LOOKING FOR Suitable Boy around 32–34y for Mudaliar Girl 29y B.Tech working in CIBC Canada.Shiva gothram from Mudaliar or Pillai boys Preferably from Canada. Details 9392384362

MUDALIAR VEG 49/163 Bpt Ch Seek well Settled Groom Pillai Brahmin Widowr with child Ok Geetham 9884858014

BRIDEGROOM WANTED
VELLALAR PILLAI, Doctor (MBBS) Bride, US Citizen, age 24, height 152 cm, Poosam, Kataka Rasi, currently preparing to join the Residency program in the US, is looking for suitable Doctor bridegroom preferably from VELLALA community living in the US.
Text to Whatsapp no: 94481 16931

MD(S) 30 Divorcee Short Lived for A month Fair Slim Seeks never Married/ Divorcee CNB below 35. 9884318582

TELUGU

GAVARA NAIDU, 23/Fair, M.Sc.,B.Ed., Business family, running school, seeks well educated any profession or business groom. Contact : 94434 65588.

COSMOPOLITAN

ARMY HAVILDAR Clerk Hindu Pillai 29/174 Rohini BBA Seeking Bride Cast No Bar WA 9495848462

DIVORCEE

MUSLIM ACADEMIC, PhD, 64, NRI, religious, seeks Muslim bride aged 40–60. Vernacular, wealth, issues, caste no bar. Contact maamohideen@yahoo.com.au.

DIVORCE 43, Hindu Govt Gazetted officer, seeks suitable educated bride caste no bar Ct: 63808 39406

SMART, SUCCESSFUL 38, 171cm, progressive US–based professional at global MNC. Seeks educated, compatible S Indian bride. Call/WA 93456 34365

SMART GRACEFUL 51 year old divorcee, No Issues seeking caring partner,also without issues, caste no bar. Contact: 9841672014

DOCTOR

DOCTOR MS Surgeon, RC Catholic Nadar, 32, Divorcee, No children, Tirunelveli seeking Doctor alliance. 9488104192

MD DOCTOR/ Elite /25 years/Vellalar /Fair /Good looking seeks PG doctors/well settled professionals CNB WhatsApp 9500163683

HINDI

1985/175CM, 50 Lakhs PA, Never Married, Bangalore. WhatsApp: 96290 12248

MALAYALAM

MALAYALEE NAIR, 31 years, IT professional, well-educated and well-settled in Trichy, seeks a suitable bride from Coimbatore / Trichy / Madurai. Well-mannered and family-oriented background preferred. Contact: 98430 59929

Wanted Bride Handsome Nair Youth Age 34 Yrs, 163cm, Upper Middle Class, Own Business of Medical Equipments Import, Financially stable seeking Slim Graduate Bride. Contact. 9995393624 No agencies please.

TAMIL

RC 28YRS Er Graduate, MNC, decent salary from Business family. Seeks bride from decent family community no bar details to: dalsingroup@gmail.com / 9840239597

CHRISTIAN, 29, Doctor, looking for any caste in doctor profession. Ph: 7356483111

CATHOLIC 27 /173/ BE/ MNC/ Chennai/ Handsome/ Seeks Educated Girl. Contact: 9025608385

TELUGU

HINDU NAIDU 40 yrs 172cm Divorced no children, Well settled educated family seeks professionally well qualified groom from (40-44) Contact no. 9842470621.

NAIDU 25/165 Fair Beautiful, BE, MBA, HRM, Amazon, 1200000.PA, Well Settled, CNB. 9043991629, 9043987029

✔ **HINDU / Naidu / 28 yrs / 192 cm / Engineer / US citizen seeks bride employed @ USA. Ph. 9994363830 / 9600022622.**

Reddy Girl 2001 Born / 163 / Beautiful / Hyderabad / from a Affluent family is looking for a Match (Net-worth) 1000 cr. Ph: 080-69074915

TELUGU

GROOM WANTED Rich Naidu,25yrs,B.Tech, MBA (canada), Elite Industrial background Ph:6369113665

Naidu Girl 30/165 cm Aswini pursuing PhD Doctoral studies in Satellite Communications Neuromorphic Computing European space agency Europe-completing by Dec 2026 seeking suitable groom PhD / MS in USA. 98401 03686

URDU

SMU 32/167 bride MBBS MD, Chennai seeks Doctor/Engineer groom from good family. Whatsapp/Ct:9585547701

Sunni Muslim girl, 2003 born, B.Com, from a highly respected affluent family, seeking a cultured and well-matched partner. 080-69072057

TAMIL

CHRISTIAN, 35/ 170cm, Divorcee, B.E. M.S (USA) Work Permit. Looking for a Suitable Bride working at USA Ct: 9003212573

RC CHRISTIAN, 43yrs/170, B.E. Software Engineer, never married, works for mnc, Chennai. CT– 9500188067

SEEKING TAMIL Hindu BRIDE for our son, March 1990/173cm, MTech(IIT), MS(US), working in US. Parents intercaste Thevar and Iyengar, Caste No Bar. 96008 65587, sivampankajam@gmail.com

HINDU-TAMIL- BE / SWE / 34yrs / 172CMS / 33LPA / Ayillam -Kadagam . Well educated and settled in Bangalore, financially stable. Looking for suitable Bride from educated family. Contact No: 9845401461.

LOOKING FOR bride, My Son earns 15L PA aged 39 H 168cm. Two own house in chennai. mob 9697750005.

MUDALIAR, NOV 1991, 172 cm, M.S PhD (IIT Madras), PDF(UK), Asst. Prof (Vellore), 18 LPA, Educated bride, CNB, 6383617937(w), vjk.iitm@gmail.com

BRIDE WANTED Hindu Nadar 30yrs, B.tech, MBA,SWE, 3Lac p/m Elite business family Ct:9841329471/ 9380791999

PILLAI 44 Divorcee M.Com Central Govt service Rs.13.50 lakhs PA seeks bride caste no bar 9094020665

Mudaliyar 54/170 unmarried B.Com Manager- Pvt concern 50K seeks well settled bride. CNB. Ph: 93602 97552

PILLAI, SOZHIA Vellalar 41yrs MBA, Manager, Pvt. 6 Lpa Divorcee, Seeks suitable bride, CNB. Ct: 9952362396

MUDALIAR/ PILLAI, DOB:29.05.93/ 183cm, Pooram/Simmam,BE,MS (USA)N. Veg,Working inUSA,Seeks suitable bride (25–31yr)Studying/Workingin USA/INDIA Caste no bar Mother:9003713942

HINDU, 36, divorced, any caste, Doctor, 30 lakhs. Ph: 8138900316

HINDU, NAIDU, 29, MS, USA, 20 crores. Ph: 8138901281

HINDU, NADAR, MBM, 10 crores, UK. Ph: 8137003550

HINDU, 28, Yadav, Doctor, 40 lakhs. Ph: 9072777811

DKV 2nd Marriage 53 / 3.5 LPM Sr. GM B'lore Seeks Issueless Girl CNB 9442607143.

DKV Divorcee 44 / 1.5 LPM DGM PSU Son with Mother Seeks Issueless Girl CNB 8903778148.

B.TECH FAIR telugu brahmin 1983 born / 183 cm Singapore MN bank seeks telugu / tamil brahmin girls, graduates /proff slim below 35Y primarly willing to relocate. Contact: 98401 08553 (Parents).

VANNIAR B.TECH Mechatronics,31 Entrepreneur Affluent family.Seek Bride SameComunity.9444453825/94454 29365

HINDU, 31, Masters, 70 lakhs, any caste. Ph: 9048444858

HINDU, 32, Divorced, Thevar, looking from same community in divorced or unmarried. Ph: 9072777811

✔ **MUDALIAR, THIRUVADURAI–MITHUNAM, Sep 95 born, 6.1 ft, B.E–CSE, Sr.Dev. Wipro, 18LPA, H1B Cap appIn appvd by USCIS, good character & family, well settled boy, seeks well educated & settled, slim & fair, good character & family girl, Ct/WA 94432 28917**

VANNIYAR S.PRAVEEN Kumar, BE, 1.20/M, Moola Nakshatram, Dhanush Rasi, Ch– 77. Ct:8610711668 / 9884470377

GAVARA NAIDU Affluent family Chennai 29/165 ME Design Engineer in MNC and Own Business, Rental income also, Star Thiruvonam Rasi Magaram, CNB Call 9841097110

HINDU NAIDU/PILLAI, 30/180, Vishagam, Virchigam, ME, Sr. Engineer, Pvt. Chennai, CNB. Ct: 9840619480.

SEEKS BRIDE from Parvatharajakulam Community with BE Age Less than 25 Yrs for BE(Mech) Boy Aged 26, Software Engr working in Reputed Firm in Chennai Ct: 9445020858/ 9345370904

VANNIYAR, 27 years/165 cm, B.Tech in MIT, salary 1.5Lac pm, own house and properties in Chennai. Seeks working graduate bride–25 years–middle–class family. Call: 9445942311

Hindu Nadar 40 SBI Bank Coimbatore Remarriage seeks Bride MB 9942280831

MUDALIAR 29/187 Handsome, BE, MBA, Industrialist, 8000000.PA, Elite Family CNB. 9043991629, 9043987029

BRIDE WANTED Mudaliyar,28yrs,MBBS, MD,DNB,Own Transports& Warehouses in Chennai,Affluent family:6369113665

ADIDRAVIDAR AGE 29 BE, MBA Pvt 85000 / well settled wants suitable bride. ct: 8122289871, 9444139323

TAMIL

BRIDE WANTED

Alliance invited – Tamil Hindu, slim and handsome groom aged 29, height 180 cm, MD-Neurology Resident, in USA, J1 visa holder, Financially secure and independent, gives importance to active lifestyle and physical fitness, only son of professionally qualified, affluent parents based in Chennai. Looking for slim, professionally qualified, bride working in USA or willing to migrate to USA. Broadminded groom, Religion / Caste/ Language no bar.

Contact WhatsApp: 9840671046, Email: vallichinnamani@gmail.com

BRIDE WANTED

40 years, 170 cm, Ayilyam, kadagam, 15 Lacs pm income, Hindu/widower with one male child/Vanniyar, rich & disciplined Graduate from Reputed Family. Knowing English, Tamil, Gujarathi & Hindi. **Seeks Fair bride below 37 years, Unmarried / Divorcee No issues from BC/MBC/FC**

Contact: 9443244060

TAMIL

HINDU MUDALIAR 34/165 M.Tech, Lecturer, seeks good family bride. Caste No Bar. Ct: 9791507303

NAIDU, B.TECH., Age :34, Punarpoosam, Working in Germany Rs.72 Lakhs p/a. Ct:73054 60763

SEEKING ALLIANCE for Iyer Brahacharanam K K SAHISHNU DOB 28/06/97 Star Revathy 2nd Paadham Kausika Gothram B E Mech Engg. Working in Chennai as Sr Project Engineer. Girl should be educated. Both Employed or unemployed preferred. Interested may contact +919444853464 Krishnaswamy Parent.

AUS CTZN Tamil Brahmin Kashyap June 1973 Groom invites Brahmin Brides. +91 99620 02012

BRAHMIN WIDOWER 70 seeks a companion widow or spinster in Bangalore Contact 7022307718

Seeking BRIDE for Bridegroom
Hindu, Kulalar/Udayaar, 44 yrs, 170 cms, M.Tech, IT professional, Caste open for discussion. First Marriage Only
CT: 93842 76066

37Y B.Com Pooram Rs 3 lakhs per month seeks any graduate bride. No brokers. 96291 95475 / 044- 28444665

TAMIL

CSI CHRISTIAN Boy 38 years Divorcee, MDS, Dental Surgeon, Own Clinic, 7 Lakh PM, well settled, Coimbatore, Seeks bride, Caste & Religion No bar. Ct :9843865067 / 9790166987

Bride for 29 Years Iyer Boy, BTech. OwnHouse in Chennai. Contact: 9500655275.

HNCNB, 43, 180, MBA Dvr, 2L pm, L-Bride, W/o-Kid, Contact: 9825661334.

TELUGU

NAIDU 29/180 Handsome, BE, MS, Tech Business, 6000000.PA, CH, Elite Family, CNB. 9043991629, 9043987029

NAIDU 37, BE, ECE, Quality Engr in Pvt Company Well Settled Family in Chennai. Caste NoBar 8939090211

Balija Telugu (Naidu), 1995 Born, 180cm, Well-educated, handsome boy from a reputed high-class business family, Bangalore - 9972605001

Naidu Boy 1992 Born / 180 / MBBS / Surgeon / Hyderabad resident / looking for a suitable match (9840016478)

URDU

Sunni Muslim doctor (1997), MBBS/MD – General Medicine, from an affluent Bangalore family, seeking a suitable match. 080-69072057

MARRIAGE BUREAU

US UK Australia All Caste Religion 1st Marriage Remarriage. 8248757840

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AJC English School (CBSE),
Post Box 7, LBS Road,
Kumbakonam,
Thanjavur District 612001
email: ajcschool@gmail.com
Ph: 0435-2420730

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, VIVEK Sengar s/o Vinay Singh Sengar born on 15/10/1990 residing at #836, 3rd Floor, 7th Main, AECS Layout, B Block, Singasandra, Bangalore 560068, have changed my name to Vivek Singh Sengar vide affidavit dated 27–Mar–26 at Bangalore

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Lack of amenities force villagers surrounded by Kudremukh park to move out

Sathish G.T.
BHALEKADI
(CHIKKAMAGALURU)

"I get rice free from the government under the Anna Bhagya scheme. But, to carry it home, I need to spend ₹600 on an autorickshaw," says Sunitha, a resident of Bhalekadi, a village in Kere gram panchayat of Sringeri taluk in Chikkamagaluru district. This statement of Ms. Sunitha, who is from a tribal community (Gowdlu/Malekudiya), sums up the hardship faced every day by residents of Bhalekadi, which is surrounded by the Kudremukh National Park.

No development work
Lack of basic amenities, coupled with diseases bringing down yield in arecanut farms, have prompted the villagers to move out of the region where they have lived for generations. As the village is interspersed with the national park, the government hardly takes up any development work in the village.

"If someone falls sick and needs urgent emergency healthcare, it takes hours to reach the nearest hospital in Sringeri, about 26 km from our village," explained Rangappa. A couple of months ago his wife, Sunitha, developed chest pain. It took him more than an hour just to arrange for an autorickshaw to take her to the hospital. Later, she was moved to Manipal in neighbouring Udupi district for better treatment.

Bhalekadi is home to about 45 families. They have built houses in revenue land and their own farmland, where they have been cultivating arecanut. In recent years, yellow-leaf disease and leaf-spot diseases has decreased the yield substantially.

Residents of Bhalekadi village in Sringeri taluk of Chikkamagaluru district are ready to give up their land and arecanut plantations. SATHISH G.T.

Rehabilitation demand
The vanishing areca farms have prompted villagers to urge the State and Central governments to rehabilitate them with a package.

For the past few years, they had been contemplating moving out, citing the lack of roads, public transport and other facilities. Valuation of their assets was also conducted in 2021-22. However, the files have not moved further since then.

According to Forest Department officials, around 1,382 families live on the boundary of the national park.

Among them, 653 have volunteered to move out of the area.

They want a decent package to rebuild their lives in a new place. When two people died of an elephant attack in October, 2025, the government assured the residents of honouring their requests for rehabilitation at the earliest.

Prabhakar, who lives at Huligarbailu locality in Bhalekadi village, said that his farmland and house had been evaluated by the Forest Department.

"We have been waiting for the government to consider our demand and release the package," he said.

Mr. Prabhakar, who belongs to the Gowdlu community, and his close relatives – altogether 12 families – have resolved to live together even after they are relocated.

"We will purchase land at one place by using the package money, and will stay together," said Bhaskar, also a resident of Kodige.

Plummeting yield
Even the families that chose to stay in the village are now willing to move because of the diseases affecting arecanut farms.

Anthony, who was a Class 1 contractor of the Public Works Department, purchased 20 acres of land in 1991 and cultivated arecanut at Umbalakere village. "Once I used to get a yield of 100 quintals. Now, it has come down to a meagre four quintals. I am also ready to move out as looking after the arecanut plantation is not profitable," he said.

Village of single women

The Hindu Bureau
BHALEKADI
(CHIKKAMAGALURU)

Vaddina Karke, a locality in Bhalekadi village, has seven families, and five of them are led by single women.

Vanajakshi, Revathi, Asha, Vedavathi and Rathnamma lost their husbands for various reasons in the last few years. Facing the difficulties that life amidst thick forests constantly throws up, the women are taking care of their children and the farmland. They too have expressed a desire to move out of the area. They have appealed to the government of Karnataka to assess their properties, and offer fair compensation.

Bagalkot district played a role in careers of five ex-Chief Ministers

It is also credited with giving a political lifeline to S. Nijalingappa and Siddaramaiah when they were in a tough spot

Rishikesh Bahadur Desai
BELAGAVI

Bagalkot is the only district in North Karnataka to be associated with five Chief Ministers of the State. The Bagalkot constituency in the district is among the two going for byelections on April 9.

Voters of the district are credited with giving political lifeline to two former Chief Ministers when they were in a tough spot. The late S. Nijalingappa and the incumbent Siddaramaiah left their native districts seeking safe seats here. Nijalingappa won the Bagalkot seat in the 1962 Assembly byelections and Mr. Siddaramaiah won from Badami in 2018.

Congress strategists reasoned that the Badami seat, held by Kuruba community leader B.B. Chimmanakatti was a safe seat for Mr. Siddaramaiah owing to the significant Kuruba population in the taluk. Mr. Siddaramaiah who was said to be facing anti-incumbency in Mysuru district revived his political prospects in Badami. He returned to his seat of Varuna after five years.

Former Chief Minister B.D. Jatti was elected from Jamkhandi in 1958 and S.R. Kanthi, who held office for three months, was elected from Hungund in 1962. Ramakrishna Hegde, a native of Siddapura in Uttara Kannada district, sought to enter Parliament through the Bagalkot Lok Sabha seat, but lost to Siddu Nyamagouda of the Congress in 1991. The former Chief Minister later entered the Rajya Sabha and became a Union Minister.

Bygone era: A file photo of former Chief Ministers S. Nijalingappa and Ramakrishna Hegde in 1966. Nijalingappa won the Bagalkot Assembly seat in the 1962 byelections and Hegde tried to enter the Lok Sabha from Bagalkot, but lost in 1991.

Kuruba leaders
The Bagalkot city seat, that is witnessing a bypoll now after the death of H.Y. Meti, has some interesting political features. Meti was among the few leaders from the Kuruba community to win multiple terms to the Assembly. V.L. Patil from Raibag who was a member of the first Assembly won five Assembly polls and a Lok Sabha poll. Mr. Chimmanakatti won five times. His son Bhimsen Chimmanakatti won the 2023 polls from Badami.

Meti, who shifted to Bagalkot from Guledgudda after delimitation, was also a member of the 11th Lok Sabha. Raghavendra Hitnal in Koppal and Bandeppa Kashempur in Bidar are the other members of the community to win Assembly polls at least thrice.

Since 1989, the politics of Bagalkot district has been dominated by members of a few families - the Metis , the Sarnayaks , the Niranis, the Charantimath brothers, and the Pujar family.

Members of all these families have won two elections or more. Meti won four – two each from Bagalkot and Guledgudda. After 2008, Viranna Charantimath and Meti were elected in alternate elections.

Meti's victory in 2023 was made easier after Mallikarjun Charantimath, younger brother of Mr. Viranna Charantimath, contested as an Independent and got over 10,000 votes. The margin of victory was around 5,800 votes.

Home to UKP project

The Hindu Bureau
BELAGAVI

Bagalkot lies nestled between the five districts of Kittur Karnataka and Kalyana Karnataka – Belagavi, Gadag, Vijayapura on one side and Koppal and Raichur on the other. With three rivers running through it, the district has the highest irrigated land in northern Karnataka area after Yadgir.

The district is home to the Upper Krishna Project (UKP) that includes the biggest irrigation project that witnessed the largest resettlement and rehabilitation efforts in the State.

However, it remains incomplete. There is a demand for increasing the height of the dam to 524 metres, from the 519 metres now.

This would require fresh land acquisition and another round of rehabilitation and resettlement. Some farmers' associations have been alleging that the compensation was not adequate.

On the last day of its recent session, the State Assembly adopted a resolution to fix skin plates to the Lal Bahadur Shastri dam at Almatti to impound more water. During their recent visit to the city, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar have announced that they will spend over ₹30,000 crore on the third phase.

UDAN scheme: ₹146.89 cr. utilised for running seven tier-II airports in Karnataka

Hemanth C.S.
BENGALURU

Seven airports in Karnataka have been operationalised under the Regional Connectivity Scheme - Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (RCS-UDAN), and ₹146.89 crore is the expenditure incurred for operating these airports.

The seven airports are Bidar, Mysuru, Vidyanagar, Hubbali, Kalaburagi, Belagavi, and Shivamogga.

As per information by Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol to a question in the Rajya Sabha during the ongoing Budget session of Parliament, ₹146.89 crore has been utilised under the UDAN scheme till October 31, 2025.

Of the ₹146.89 crore, the expenditure incurred on the Mysuru airport was ₹41.40 crore followed by ₹37.69 crore on the Hubballi airport, ₹28.64 crore on Kalaburagi, ₹20.88 crore on Belagavi, ₹12.29 crore on the Bidar airport, and ₹5.99 crore on the Vidyanagar airport.

The Shivamogga airport is operated directly by the State government through Karnataka State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (KSIIDC).

The expenditure incurred on the Mysuru airport was ₹41.40 crore.
FILE PHOTO

A total of 118 RCS routes have been operationalised from these seven airports with Mysuru and Vidyanagar being the first to start flights in 2017, followed by Hubballi airport in 2018, Belagavi and Kalaburgi in 2019, Bidar in 2020 and Shivamogga in 2023.

No operation
Among these, Kalaburgi has stopped flight operations, while Bidar and Vidyanagar airports, which had also temporarily closed, have resumed services.

Mr. Mohol in his reply said that the Kalaburagi airport would be considered in forthcoming rounds of bidding.

Not viable
The Union government earlier this week extended the subsidy period for airlines on select tier-2 and tier-3 routes under the UDAN scheme from three to five years, after a large share of those routes fell into disuse.

To improve the viability of district airports, Mr. Patil said he had proposed to the Union Civil Aviation Minister that the UDAN scheme be extended from three years to five years. He added that for the subsequent five years, the Centre and the State governments could jointly support operations in a 50:50 ratio.

To another question on aviation infrastructure projects undertaken in Karnataka, Mr. Mohol said at the Hubballi and Belagavi airports, the construction of a new domestic terminal building along with extension and reconfiguration of apron bays for Code "C" type aircraft, including allied infrastructure, is being undertaken.

Panel set up to strengthen palliative care services

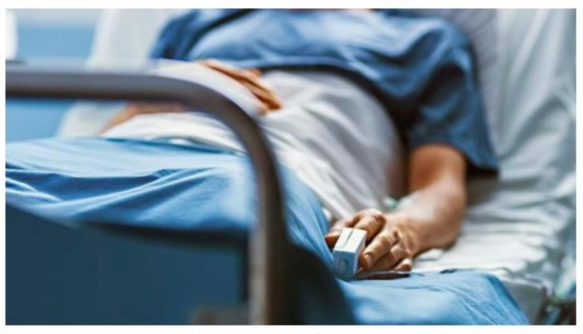
The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Karnataka government has constituted a State-level Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for palliative care to guide the planning, implementation, and monitoring of services across Karnataka.

The decision, notified in a Government Order dated March 23, follows a proposal from the Health Department highlighting the need for structured technical guidance and coordinated efforts to expand palliative care.

Palliative care aims to improve the quality of life of patients and their families facing serious and life-limiting illnesses through early identification and management of pain and other physical, psychological, and social issues.

The initiative is aligned with the National Programme for Palliative Care (NPPC). The government has also indicated its intent to draw from best practices, particularly the community-based model implemented in Kerala, which combines home-based, outpatient and inpatient care with community participation. A dedicated allocation for palliative care was announced in the recent Budget session.


Palliative care aims to help patients facing serious illnesses through early identification and management of pai.n

Officials said the panel is intended to provide policy support, technical oversight and inter-departmental coordination, and is expected to improve access to services, especially for those with cancer and chronic illnesses.

The committee will be chaired by the Principal Secretary (Health and Family Welfare). Members include the Director of Health and Family Welfare Services, Deputy Director (Non-Communicable Diseases), and Deputy Director (Mental Health).

Subject experts include Anuradha Ganigara, associate professor, Department of Anesthesiology and Paediatric Palliative Medicine at the State-run Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health; Yadhuraj Gowda M.K., head of the Department of Palliative Medicine at government-run Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology; Rajani Surendra Bhat, interventional pulmonologist and palliative care physician at Sparsh Hospitals; and Nandini Vallath, professor and head, Department of Pain and Palliative Medicine at St. John's Medical College Hospital. A representative from a recognised NGO, including Pallium India, Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement, Karunashraya Trust or One Billion Lives Foundation, will also be included.

The Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology already serves as the nodal centre for the Karnataka Palliative Care Policy Cell.

Terms of reference
According to the terms of reference, the committee will advise on policy, standards, treatment protocols and service delivery across primary, secondary and tertiary levels.

It will also focus on improving access to essential narcotic drugs for pain management.

The panel will recommend standards, treatment protocols and service delivery models across all levels of care. It will guide integration with State and national health programmes, review action plans, and advise on infrastructure, human resources, training and referral systems.

The committee will also monitor programme performance, service coverage, availability of essential medicines and quality of care, and promote evaluation, research and best practices.

Welcoming the move, Dr. Gowda said the committee will help streamline palliative care efforts. "This is an important step towards integrating palliative care into the public health system. With better access to essential medicines and stronger community participation, services can be expanded across the State," he said.

'Bishops should know Kannada'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Akhila Karnataka Catholic Christian Kannada Sangha on Saturday staged a demonstration at Freedom Park, demanding that the church hierarchy mandate Kannada proficiency for bishops appointed to the State. Leading the protest, writer and former Rajya Sabha member L. Hanumanthaiah asserted that religious heads from other States must undergo at least six months of functional Kannada training before assuming office, said a release.

Addressing the gathering, Mr. Hanumanthaiah clarified that the movement is not about challenging global church structures but about local representation.

"We are demanding that those leading churches in Bengaluru and across Karnataka be locals."

BANGALORE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
T. Chowdaiah Road, Kumara Park West, Bengaluru - 560 020

No. BDA/EE(ID)/TEN/203/2025-26 Date: 25.03.2026

INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT)
(Through GoK e-Procurement platform https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)

Bangalore Development Authority, hereby invites Tender for "Construction of 4 Lane Elevated Corridor on Bellary Road from UAS Staff Quarters to Mehkri Circle along with up and down Ramp in East West Elevated Corridor Bengaluru through Engineering Procurement Construction (EPC) Mode." (Indent Number: BDA/2025-26/FL/WORK-INDENT231). Original Notice inviting bid was issued on 30.12.2025 for this project. **Estimated Amount: Rs. 419.73** Crore (Excluding GST). **Bid Security: Rs. 4.20 Crore. Completion Period: 18 Months.**
Tender Schedule: (1) Tender Published Date: **26.03.2026** (2) Last Date and time for tender queries is: **01.04.2026, 16:00:00** (3) Last Date and time for Receipt of Tenders: **13.04.2026, 16:00:00** (4) Date and time of opening Technical bid: **15.04.2026, 16:30:00** (5) Date and time of opening Financial bid: **18.04.2026, 16:30:00**
Interested bidders can view further details on **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** and for more details it is requested to contact the Infrastructure Division of BDA during office hours.
Helpline/WhatsApp. 94831 66622 (24x7). @BDAOfficialGoK

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Infrastructure Division, BDA, Bengaluru

Matchday tribute

In memory: Ahead of the first IPL match of the season on Saturday, 11 seats at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru reserved in tribute to those who lost their lives in a stampede while celebrating the victory of the home team Royal Challengers Bengaluru last year. K. MURALI KUMAR

Notify Amaravati as sole capital, A.P. urges Centre

Assembly passes resolution seeking to amend Section 5 (2) of the A.P. Reorganisation Act, sends it to Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha

V. Raghavendra
VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly on Saturday passed a resolution, requesting the Union government to declare and notify Amaravati as the sole capital city of the State.

The resolution says the words "at Amaravati" be inserted in Section 5(2) of the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act (APRA), 2014 and that "Amaravati includes the Capital city areas notified under the A.P. Capital Regional Development Act, 2014" be added to the explanation, as advised by the High Court in its March 3, 2022 order.

Speaker Ch. Ayyanna Patrudu forwarded the resolution to the Chairman of Rajya Sabha, Lok Sabha Speaker, Union Home Minister, Secretary of the Union Home Ministry, and Chief Secretary of the State government to have the APRA amended to that effect.

The 11 MLAs of the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP), including its president, Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, remained absent when the resolution was passed in the House.

Moving the resolution, Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu said the State government had shifted its base of operation to the Vijayawada-Guntur region soon after the bifurcation of the unified State in 2014, though it could stay in Hyderabad, the joint capital of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, for 10 more years.

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu addresses a special session of the Assembly in Amaravati on Saturday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"The government wanted to build A.P.'s own capital as quickly as possible. However, the then Leader of the Opposition, Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, had initially offered unconditional support to the capital proposed in Amaravati, but changed his stand after winning the 2019 election, due to sheer political expediency," he said.

"The Sivaramakrishnan Committee had clearly stated in its report (submitted in 2014) that 46% of the people of Andhra Pradesh wanted the capital to be located between Vijayawada and Guntur," Mr. Naidu saidwhile pointing out that the TDP government of the day took various steps across the State to ensure decentralised growth.

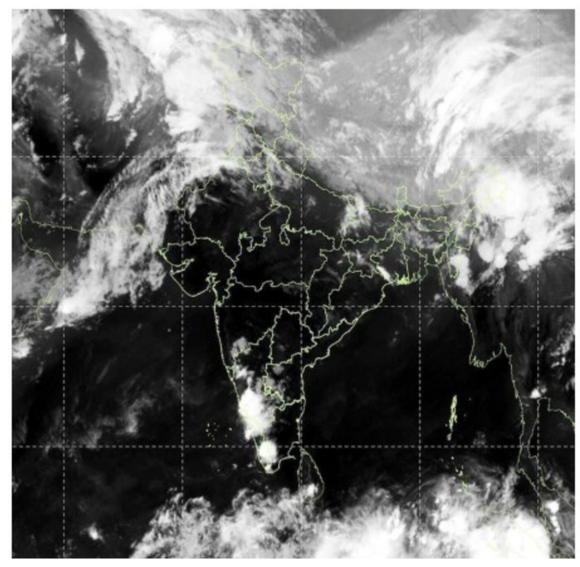
Mr. Naidu said that 'Andhra State' came into existence in 1953 following the supreme sacrifice made by Potti Sreeramulu, and the first capital was set up in Kurnool before it was shifted to Hyderabad after 'Andhra Pradesh' was formed in 1956. The capital moved to Amaravati post-bifurcation.

The Chief Minister noted that he had, at the time of bifurcation, fought for 'equal justice' to both Telangana and the residual State of Andhra Pradesh, while Mr. Jagan Mohan Reddy was focused on 'protecting his political interests'.

Mr. Naidu said he envisaged Amaravati as an economic powerhouse for the entire State.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Sunday: Heavy Rainfall likely in isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura. Thunderstorm with hailstorm likely in isolated places over Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Gilgit, Baltistan, Muzaffarabad, Punjab and Rajasthan.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	28.7	23.6	Kozhikode	—	36.2	27.4
Ahmedabad	—	37.5	25.2	Kurnool	—	38.5	27.5
Aizawl	—	26.5	16.6	Lucknow	2.6	33.3	19.0
Allahabad	5.0	36.6	18.8	Madurai	—	39.0	23.6
Bengaluru	—	34.6	23.2	Mangaluru	—	33.8	26.2
Bhopal	—	36.2	19.6	Mumbai	—	33.1	24.7
Bhubaneswar	—	36.2	20.4	Mysuru	—	36.0	22.0
Chandigarh	—	32.9	16.1	New Delhi	—	32.1	18.5
Chennai	—	34.5	25.0	Patna	5.8	30.1	20.4
Coimbatore	—	37.0	24.5	Port Blair	—	32.7	24.5
Dehradun	—	30.0	16.4	Puducherry	—	33.3	22.2
Gangtok	22.0	12.6	10.4	Pune	—	36.6	18.4
Goa	—	34.3	25.4	Raipur	—	38.7	23.1
Guwahati	24.0	24.6	19.0	Ranchi	—	32.2	16.0
Hubballi	—	37.0	21.0	Shillong	18.0	16.7	9.4
Hyderabad	9.4	38.5	23.4	Shimla	—	22.4	11.8
Imphal	4.8	24.9	15.7	Srinagar	—	22.2	8.6
Jaipur	—	34.9	21.8	Thiruvananthapuram	—	36.1	27.0
Kochi	3.0	31.8	26.8	Tiruchi	—	38.5	24.4
Kohima	—	18.8	10.8	Vijayawada	—	37.6	25.2
Kolkata	14.0	32.2	20.8	Visakhapatnam	—	33.1	26.3

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	5	22	23	31	111	
Bengaluru	4	42	22	100	141	
Chennai	8	14	—	89	63	
Delhi	52	44	98	221	250	
Hyderabad	13	19	24	66	88	
Kolkata	8	42	32	36	47	
Lucknow	5	46	20	98	82	
Mumbai	17	74	5	62	104	
Pune	—	32	27	117	116	
Visakhapatnam	31	36	13	50	105	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Mandi Gobindgarh, Punjab Odisha recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 296 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir recorded a healthy AQI score of 35

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

From Page One

Teacher booked for Islamophobic remarks

However, the police registered only a non-cognisable report on Friday and no FIR was registered. The student, who visited the station, was allegedly sent back.

Lokesh B. Jagalasar, Deputy Commissioner of Police (South Division), said the victim had approached the police and later sought time.

"We will take action based on the complaint," he said earlier on Saturday. However, following outrage over lack of police action, the Girinagar Police registered a *suo motu* case later in the day.

Based on the complaint lodged by head constable Ravikumar T.N., who said he saw the video doing the rounds on social media and making no mention of the NCR registered on Friday, an FIR was registered against the professor charging him under Section 299, Section 352 of BNS, 2023.

Meanwhile, the Students Islamic Organisation of India, Karnataka chapter, strongly condemned the incident, terming it Islamophobia within an academic space.

In a statement, SIO State secretary, Mohammed Hayyan, said such conduct violated the principles of inclusivity and mutual respect expected in educational institutions.

Anganwadi breakfast project begins in Telangana

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy launched a breakfast scheme – *Tholi Mudda* – for anganwadi children at a programme held on the Assembly premises.

Under the scheme, the government will provide ready-to-cook breakfast items to children attending anganwadis.

"Today, while the country has achieved food security, nutritional security remains a challenge," he observed. Mr. Reddy emphasised that however well the government designs welfare programmes, their success ultimately depends on anganwadi staff.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public are informed that my client **K.SRINIVASA RAO** intended to purchase all that piece and parcel of residential Corner BDA Site No.79/B, Old Municipal No.79/B, having and E-PID No.74-6-79/B, situated in **HAL 2nd Stage, Kodihalli, Bangalore,** Old BBMP Ward No.74, Now Ward No. 88 – Jeevanbheema Nagar, Measuring On the East 30 Feet 0 inches (9.15 Meters), On the West 43 Feet 3 inches (13.30 Meters), On the North 38 Feet 3 inches (11.65 Meters) and On the South 40 Feet 6 inches (12.34 Meters) in all measuring 1401 Sqft (130.2692 Sq.Mtrs), along with 64.288876 Sq.Mtrs., RCC Roofed Residential Constructed building thereon consisting of Ground Floor measuring 692 Sq. Ft., First Floor 692 Sq. Ft. and Second Floor 692 Sq Ft., having Vitrified Tiles Flooring, Sal Wood Doors & Windows, with all civic amenities and bounded on ;

East by : Road.
West by : Private Property.
North by : Site No.79/A.
South by : Road.

From the present Owner viz., **Dr. R.JAYARAM S/o Late S.Rajagopalan.**

Persons having any right over the said property may lodge their objections/claims with documentary evidence within **7 days** from this day to the undersigned. In the absence of any claims within the above said period. It shall be deemed that there are no such claims or that if there are any claims and they have not been made, it shall be deemed to have been waived.

P. NAGAMUNI REDDY,
Advocate, SNN Associates,
No.248, 2nd Floor, 10th Main,
1st Block, 100 Feet Road, HRBR Layout,
Kalyan Nagar, Bengaluru – 560043,
Land Mark – Near Horamavu Signal,
Above Canara Bank & HDFC ATM.
M : 9448089804 & 7676018010

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. 45-CWM-UBLS-2025-26 Dtd 25.03.2026

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tender for the following work.

SN	Name of work	Approx.Value
1	Ultra Sonic Testing of LHB wheel discs on the rim tread region for a period of 24 months for a Quantity 4992 Nos LHB wheel sets.	Rs. 31,91,485.44 (Incl of GST)

Last date for Submission of bids :
Upto 16.00 hrs on 16.04.2026

Tender Notice No. 44-CWM-UBLS-2025-26 Dtd 24.03.2026

1	Designing,Printing, Supply & Installation of vinyl Board, Non Tearable Sheet and Card Sheet etc. as and when required basis for the purpose of implementation 5S certification, ISO 3834 Certification and Integrated Management System Certification at Carriage Repair Workshop Hubballi.	Rs. 6,32,650.96 (Incl of GST)

Last date for Submission of bids :
Upto 16.00 hrs on 15.04.2026

For details log on : **www.ireps.gov.in**

Deputy Chief Workshop Manager, Hubballi
PUB/1031/AAD360/PRB/SWR/2025-26

Download the **RailOne** app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform tickets, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through **RailOne** app, and enjoy up to a **3%** discount.

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | @SWRAILWAYHQ | @sw_railways

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the General Public that my clients **Mr. Mr. Kantharaj & Mr. Magesh M., Sons of Mariyappa** are intend to purchase schedule property, and have entered in agreement of sale with **Mrs. P. Padmavathi, Mr. M. Dharmaraj & Mrs. M. Lakshmi, legal heirs of Late M. Murugesh, S/o. Late G.Munivenkatappa and the said Mrs. P. Padmavathi** claims that the Original Sale Deed dt.16.9.1950, Reg.No.1975/50-51 of Bk I, Volume 1189 pages 57-60, registered in the Office of Sub Registrar, Bangalore City registered in the name of G.Munivenkatappa, is lost, E-complaint is lodged for loss of document, Lost Report No.2083378/2026, on 26.2.2026, and a notice for lost document is published in Indian Express on 1.3.2026.

If person/s having any right, title or interest or claim over the schedule property, he/she shall substantiate the same by producing documentary evidence and by filing objections, in the office of the undersigned within **20 days,** from the date of publications of this notice. If no objections are received within the said period, my clients will presume that the property is free from any encumbrances, objections, claims and proceed to purchase the schedule property. Any claims, objections received subsequently will not be entertained.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of immovable Property bearing **New E-PID No.3058590608,** Old No.21, New No.17, situated at **Pemmaiah Block, (Munireddypalya), JC Nagar, Bengaluru,** measuring East to West: **41+37/2 feet;** and North to South: **20 feet;** with Ground Floor 400 square feet, RCC building with ordinary flooring, ordinary wooden doors, with amenities thereon, and bounded on:

East by- B S Rajappa's Garden; West by-Road; North by-Property belonging to Hullaiah; South by-Remaining portion of the same property

LAYAK ALI A., B. Com., LL.B.,
Advocates & Consultants
No.31, 6 Main Road, Pillappa Block,
Ganganagar, RT Nagar PO,
Bangalore-32 Mob. No.9844174668

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. 11/2026 Date : 24-03-2026

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites e-Tenders through IREPS only for supply of following items: **Tender Closing Time : 10:30 Hrs.**

Sl.	Tender No.	Description in Brief	Qty	Tender Due on
1	16251459	Overhauling Kit	60 Sets	**06.04.2026**
2	29261716	Set Of Secondary Helical Spring	88 Sets	**08.04.2026**
3	29261755	High tensile tight loco transition center buffer coupler	41 Nos.	**09.04.2026**
4	40261019	Electron Beam irradiated thin walled flexible Elastomeric cable.	21021 MTR	**13.04.2026**
5	17251130A	List of 32 KBI/NAYB stocked items of HHP Diesel locomotives	632 Sets	**14.04.2026**
6	25251028	Brake Shoe Complete	11469 Nos	**14.04.2026**
7	29261611	Kit for EP Relay valve	94 Sets	**14.04.2026**
8	29265014	Supply, installation, testing & commissioning of Roof mounted air conditioning system	15 LSET	**15.04.2026**
9	33261032	Secondary vertical damper for LHB AC coaches.	2801 Nos	**16.04.2026**
10	45251617A	Low maintenance stationary Lead Acid Traction Battery, 110 Volt/40 AH	72 Set	**16.04.2026**
11	33261041	Pad for secondary suspension	4247 Nos.	**29.04.2026**
12	33261035	Primary Vertical Damper for LHB Coaches	18211 Nos	**04.05.2026**

For details log on: **www.ireps.gov.in**

PUB/1024/AAF/PRB/SWR/2025-26 **Principal Chief Materials Manager, Hubballi**

Download the **RailOne** app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform tickets, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through **RailOne** app, and enjoy up to a **3%** discount.

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRAILWAYHQ | sw_railways

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work

Publication of E-Tender Notice No.: B-TRD-29-2025-26-OT-47 Dated : 24-03-2026

Item of work	Approx. Value
Provision of various OHE/PSI caution boards and Sectioning Diagrams over Bengaluru.	Rs. 72,10,395.49

Publication of E-Tender Notice No.: B-TRD-29-2025-26-OT-48 Dated : 24-03-2026

Item of work	Approx. Value
Lighting arrangement for tower cars of Bengaluru Division.	Rs. 10,27,675.66

Last date for submission of bids for above **Tender is:Upto 15:00 Hrs. on 16-04-2026**

For details log on: **www.ireps.gov.in**

Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer / TRD Bengaluru
PUB/1020/AAF/PRB/SWR/2025-26

Download the **RailOne** app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform tickets, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through **RailOne** app, and enjoy up to a **3%** discount.

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
O/o Executive Engineer, PWD, Udupi Division, Udupi - 576101.
C.No. : (0820) 2531802

No.PWD:UDN:NIT-57:2025-26:AE-2 Dated: 27.03.2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (2nd Call)

It is hereby notified for the information of intending eligible registered contractor in Karnataka PWD, through e-portal "kppp.karnataka.gov.in" as per Karnataka Transparency in public procurement act - 2023, as per specified terms & condition notified there in. The last date for submission of tender on 08.04.2026 through E-procurement portal "kppp.karnataka.gov.in" under 5054-80-190-0-01-132 head, 2 works costing Rs. 112.51 Lakhs to 132.75 Lakhs (excluding GST) for Retofitting / Repair of Bridge works. For more information contact office during office hours.

Sd/-, Executive Engineer
Public Works Department, Udupi Division, Udupi

KARNATAKA STATE AGRICULTURAL MARKETING BOARD
No.16, 2nd Rajbhavan Road, Bengaluru - 560001
Ph: 080-22867369, e-mail: cgmksamb@gmail.com

Ltr No:KSAMB/Pro/82 /2025-26, Date: 26.03.2026

Tender-Cum-Open Auction Notification

The Jowar procured under the Minimum Support Price Scheme for the year 2023-24, with an estimated quantity of 14,239.59 Quintals, is being stored in Karnataka State Warehousing Corporation, Bellary District Unit-2, and is invited to be disposed of, through tender-cum-open auction on an "as is and where is" basis as follows.

a. Last date to obtain Tender form : **07.04.2026**
b. Last date of submitting tender form : **08.04.2026** (before 11.00 AM)
c. Tender-cum-open Auction Date: **08.04.2026** (Afternoon 2.00 PM)
d. EMD Amount:Rs.2,00,000/- (Rs. Two Lakhs Only)
e. Contact the Karnataka State Agricultural Marketing Board offices to obtain the tender form and terms and conditions.
f. For more information, visit https://krishimaratavahini.karnataka.gov.in

Sd/-
Chief General Manager
KSAMB, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/SSC/6509/2025-26

KRISHNA BHAGYA JALA NIGAM LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
Office of the Deputy Conservator of Forests, KBJNL, Forest Division, Almatti-586201.
Tq:B.Bagewadi. Dt: Vijayapur. Phone: 08426-281410

NO.KBJNL/DCF/BUD/DTP/CAT./WW/Tender/2025-26/584 Dated:26.03.2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through e-tendering only)

On behalf of the Managing Director, KBJNL Bangalore, The Deputy Conservator of Forests, KBJNL, Forest Division Almatti invites short term tender for CAT Nursery works through e-procurement (KPPP) as per KTPP Act-1999 and Rules 2000 on Percentage basis from the eligible bidders for the work as detailed in table below. Bidders may get detailed information and terms and conditions to apply at website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in (Location:- KBJNL Division Forest Division Almatti) and in the above mentioned office. The tender processing Fee and EMD should be paid through KPPP portal.

Tender documents may be downloaded from kppp portal of Government of Karnataka.

Sl.No	Calendar of events	Dates
1	Date of Publication of Tender	26.03.2026 up to 5.00 PM
2	Pre Bid Meeting at O/o. the DEPUTY CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS, KBJNL, FOREST DIVISION, ALMATTI	01.04.2026 at 11.30 AM.
3	The last date bidder can have access to the e-tender technical bid document in the website www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in on payment of e-cash towards transaction fee as per e-procurement	10.04.2026 up to 5.00 PM
4	Date of Opening of Technical bid at O/o. the DEPUTY CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS, KBJNL, FOREST DIVISION, ALMATTI	13.04.2026 at 11.00 AM
5	Date of Opening of Finanical bid at O/o. the DEPUTY CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS, KBJNL, FOREST DIVISION, ALMATTI	15.04.2026 at 11.00 AM

Sd/- Deputy Conservator of Forests, KBJNL, Forest Division, Almatti

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ವಿಜಯಪುರ/846/ಕೆಎಸ್.ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

UNION BANK OF INDIA
(A Government of India Undertaking)
Regional Office : 2254, Kousalya, 3rd Floor, Vinoba Road, Mysuru-570005

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rule, 2002

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/ charged to the Secured Creditor, the symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorised officer of **Union Bank of India** (secured Creditor) will be sold on **"As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is basis"** on the date mentioned below, for recovery of dues as mentioned hereunder to Union bank of India from the below mentioned Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s). The Reserve Price and the Earnest Money Deposit are also mentioned hereunder.

Harohalli Branch, Kempaiah Building, Harohalli Village & Post, Ramanagara - 562112
Ph: 7351002858, Mail Id: ubin0814580@unionbankofindia.bank.in

Name And Address Of the Borrower, Co-application And Guarantor :

1. Mr. Swamy M (as He Is Deceased, His Legal Heirs) A. Mrs. Manjula M W/o Late Swamy M, B. Master Yogaraju S, C. Miss Amrutha S, All are residing at : Karadi Gudde Pipeline Road, SAMRAT Ashoka Nagara, Kanakapura Town, Ramanagara - 562117

2. Mrs. Manjula M W/o Late Swamy M, Karadi Gudde Pipeline Road SAMRAT Ashoka Nagara, Kanakapura Town, Ramanagara - 562117

Amount due : Rs. 18,53,085-00 as on 28-02-2026 with further interest, cost & expenses

Description of immovable secured assets to be Sold : All The Part And The Parcel Of Residential House In The Name Of **Mr. Late. Swamy M.** Bearing No 77, CMC Khatha No 9020/7710/77, Situated At Eastern Side Of Mysuru Road, Pipe Line Road, Kanakapura, Ramanagara – 562117, **Measuring East-West 40 Feet, North-South 20 Feet, Total 800 Square feet, Bounded By East-** Site No 76, **West-** Road, **North-** Site No 78, **South-** Road.

Reserve Price :
Rs.32,61,465-00 (Rupees Thirty Two Lakhs Sixty One Thousand Four Hundred and Sixty Five only)
Earnest Money to Be Deposited :
Rs.3,26,147-00(Rupees Three Lakhs Twenty Six Thousand One Hundred and Forty Seven only.

Date and time of E-Auction : Date: 30-04-2026 From 12.00 pm to 5.00 PM (with 10 min unlimited auto extensions)
Last date for submission of EMD : On or before the commencement of e-Auction.
E-auction website- https://baanknet.com

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale and registration and login and bidding rules visit : please refer to the link provided : https://www.unionbankofindia.co.in/auction-property/view-auction-property.aspx and www.unionbankofindia.co.in

Date : 29-03-2026
Place : Mysuru

Sd/- Authorised Officer
Union Bank of India.

Government of Karanataka
Sri Jayachamarajendra Taluk Hospital, Thirthahalli, Shivamogga (D)
e-mail: mojchospitalthirthahalli@gmail.com
Mobile No.: 9035573294

No.: JCTH/OUT SUR/465/2025-26 Date: 25.03.2026

Tender Notice for the Provision of Computer Assistant Services under AB-ARK Scheme and Group D & Non-Clinical Staff on Outsourcing Basis

Shri Jayachamarajendra Taluk Hospital, Thirthahalli, Shivamogga (G), hereby invites tenders from eligible organizations through e-procurement for the provision of Computer Assistant Services staff under the AB-ARK Scheme and Group D & non-clinical staff on an outsourcing basis for the year 2026-27. Interested and eligible tenderers should submit their tenders in a two-cover format through the e-portal https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/ on or after **20.03.2026.** The last date for uploading the tender is **10.04.2026** at 04.30 PM. Further information can be obtained from the e-portal https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/.

Sd/- Chief Medical Officer, Sri Jayachamarajendra Taluk Hospital, Thirthahalli.

DIPR/smg/No.154/03/ksmca/25-26/2093

From Page One

March economic data shows slowing growth

Vehicle registrations grew by 19.1% YoY up to March 24, and digital payment volume up to March 22 continued to expand in double digits, it said. The March 2026 round of the Rural Economic Conditions and Sentiments Survey indicates some softening in rural sentiment; however, consumption growth strengthened. This survey was conducted during the last week of February 2026 and the first week of March 2026.

The report pointed out that India continues to have relatively strong macroeconomic fundamentals, which provide resilience, but added that the evolving situation warrants continued close monitoring and calibrated policy responses.

Sectors at risk

The report included a section on the macroeconomic impact of India's dependence on imports, especially from West Asia, to meet its oil, LPG, and LNG needs. "In several segments, particularly MSMEs and continuous-process industries like glass or ceramics, the inability to switch fuels or inputs has led to production curtailment and temporary shutdowns," the report said. "The dual impact of non-availability and cost escalation is amplifying stress on margins and output."

Further, it noted that shipping disruptions and war-risk premiums have significantly increased freight and insurance costs, while transit delays have lengthened delivery cycles, hurting both imports of critical inputs and export commitments.

"Export-oriented sectors – including engineering goods, textiles, leather, and gems & jewellery – are facing reduced competitiveness due to rising logistics costs and weakening demand from Gulf markets," the report said.

It was solely a conversation between Trump, Modi: govt.

Govt. reaction comes after *NYT* reported the 'unusual appearance by private citizen' Elon Musk during the March 24 call between the two leaders; mystery grows over U.S. businessman's role

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

A day after the *New York Times* reported that U.S. businessman Elon Musk was present during a call between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and U.S. President Donald Trump on March 24, India on Saturday clarified that the conversation was only between the two leaders.

However, the government did not deny or confirm Mr. Musk's presence during the call, when the two leaders discussed the West Asia conflict.

On Saturday, the *New York Times* published a report quoting two unnamed U.S. officials who said that Mr. Musk, who no longer holds any official assignment and is the owner of Tesla, Starlink and X, participated in a phone call on Tuesday with Mr. Trump and Mr. Modi, calling it "an unusual appearance by a private citizen on a call between two heads of state during a wartime crisis".

U.S. President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a meeting in New Delhi in 2020. AP

Responding to the report, official spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the government had seen it. "The telephone conversation on 24 March was between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Donald Trump only. As has been stated earlier, it provided the opportunity for exchange of views on the situation in West Asia," Mr. Jaiswal said.

Officials had directed media to check with the U.S. Embassy or the White House, since the alleged "participation" of Mr. Musk on the call had come from the U.S. side, which had initiated the call.

The U.S. President and the White House have not issued any readout of the conversation between Mr. Trump and Mr. Modi. U.S. Ambassador to India Sergio Gor said the two leaders "discussed the ongoing situation in the Middle East, including the importance of keeping the Strait of Hormuz open".

In a post on X, Mr. Modi too said he had received a call from President Trump and "had a useful exchange of views on the situation in West Asia".

Neither side had mentioned the presence of Mr. Musk.

However, when asked by the *NYT* about Mr. Musk's role in the phone call, White House Spokesperson Karoline Leavitt said that "President Trump has a great relationship with Prime Minister Modi, and this was a productive conversation" without denying the report.

Mr. Musk, who had been appointed by Mr. Trump to lead the "Department of Government Efficiency" (DOGE) at the beginning of the U.S. President's second term, resigned within four months in May 2025 from the position over public differences over government policy.

Cong. questions Elon Musk 'joining' Trump-Modi call

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Party cites a report in the *New York Times* which said that Musk joined the phone call

The Congress on Saturday raised questions over the reported presence of billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk on the call during a recent telephone conversation between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and U.S. President Donald Trump. The party said the government must clarify the circumstances under which a businessman was part of a discussion between two national leaders.

In a post on social media, the Congress cited a report in the *New York Times* which said that Mr. Musk joined the phone call. "Was this truly about the West Asia crisis, or was there another "BUSINESS" agenda? Why did the Modi government not disclose Musk's presence?" the party asked in a post on X.

Referring to reports that U.S. President Trump had spoken to leaders of several countries amid the ongoing tensions, the Congress said no businessman was reported to have been present in those conversations. "Why did this happen only with the Indian Prime Minister?" it asked.

"Modi is simply following Trump's direction. He's more of a manager being controlled from behind the scenes than a leader," the Congress alleged.

Israel's 'brutality'

In a separate post on X, Congress communications chief Jairam Ramesh targeted the Prime Minister over "continued brutality" by Israel in Gaza.

Mr. Ramesh said that days before Mr. Modi's recent visit to Israel, the Israeli Cabinet had approved land registration in "roughly half of the occupied West Bank" which could lead to the dispossession of lakhs of Palestinians.

BJP conspiring to loot and destroy West Bengal, says Mamata Banerjee

Shrabana Chatterjee
KOLKATA

The BJP is trying to "loot" West Bengal and take over the State, said Chief Minister and Trinamool Congress leader Mamata Banerjee at an election rally on Saturday.

"They [BJP] will change our food habits, snatch our land, bulldoze and destroy everything... They are conspiring to end Bengal and make the State cease to exist," she said.

Mamata Banerjee

Murshidabad violence

Referring to the violence that broke out during a Ram Navami celebration in Murshidabad's Raghunathgunj on Friday, Ms. Banerjee said that she had been left powerless and could not take any action as all the officers working under her had been changed by the Election Commission (EC) after the polls were announced.

"Please don't blame me for the law and order situation. I don't have any power left with me since all the officers have been changed. The BJP has cherry-picked officers for the State," Ms. Banerjee said at a rally in Pashchim Bardhaman's Raniganj. She further said that she will not spare any of the accused in the long run, and will hold them accountable "today or tomorrow".

Meanwhile, Chief Electoral Officer Manoj Kumar Agarwal said the State Election Commission had received a report of the incident and confirmed that 29 people were arrested in relation to the violence.

In an appeal to the audience, Ms. Banerjee said if they vote for the BJP, it will force them to eat vegetarian food, take away their freedom to choose clothes, destroy the education system, and stop all the social schemes that were started by her government. "If you do not want these things to stop, do not vote for anyone other than Trinamool," she added.

At the three rallies she attended on Saturday, the Trinamool chairperson sharpened her attacks on the EC and the special intensive revision (SIR) process. Alleging large-scale "targeted deletions", she wanted to know how the deleted voters would seek redressal if the supplementary lists are not made public. She also said that women, Muslims, Adivasi, and other marginalised community voters had been targeted in the SIR process.

The supplementary lists with the names of 60 lakh voters who were put under adjudication are being published in phases. Two lists have been published till now. Though the polls are only three weeks away, lakhs of voters in multiple districts are still uncertain about their voting rights.

At a rally in Birbhum's Labhpur, Trinamool general secretary Abhishek Banerjee, the party's second-in-command, urged voters to bring down the BJP's Assembly seats below 50 (from the 77 at present). "This election is not just about bringing Mamata Banerjee to power for a fourth term, but about reducing the BJP seats. Wherever they win, poor people suffer the most," he said.

Only the BJP can stop demographic change in West Bengal, says Shah

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Sharpening the attack on the Trinamool Congress in West Bengal, Union Home Minister and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Amit Shah on Saturday released a "chargesheet" against the Mamata Banerjee government, accusing it of ignoring illegal infiltration and women's safety, corruption, and a deterioration in law and order.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah releases a chargesheet against the West Bengal Trinamool government in Kolkata on Saturday. ANI

Emphasising that illegal infiltration through the borders along the State has become a matter of national concern, Mr. Shah said the Assembly election was crucial to the security of the country as a whole.

"Due to appeasement and vote-bank politics of the Trinamool government, the security of the Siliguri corridor is being threatened," the Union Minister said, addressing a press conference in Siliguri. The crucial corridor is a narrow strip of land in West Bengal linking the north east to the rest of India.

Border fencing

Mr. Shah said that infiltration has resulted in artificial demographic change which can only be stopped if the BJP comes to power. He also complained about the 600 kilometres of unfenced borders with Bangladesh and the challenges of securing land under the Trinamool regime.

"On May 6, the BJP government will be formed in West Bengal, and within 45 days, the land required for fencing the border will be provided by the Bengal BJP government to the Centre, and we will stop infiltration," he said.

The senior BJP leader said that his party was "committed to identifying and deporting every infiltrator".

Referring to the incumbent Chief Minister's repeated attacks against the Election Commission (EC), Mr. Shah said, "Mamata Didi has always played the politics of victim card". He added: "Sometimes she talks about her injury, sometimes she abuses the Election Commission. But the people of Bengal now understand Mamata Didi's victim-card politics very well."

The Trinamool Congress leadership countered Mr. Shah's charges, asking why the Union Home Ministry completely failed to identify and deport illegal immigrants.

"They want to blur the line between Bengali and Bangladeshi so they can import their hateful Assam-style detention camp model into Bengal," the Trinamool Congress posted on social media.

SC judge calls for curbing tourism in fragile ecosystems

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

Highlighting the stress on fragile ecosystems placed by unchecked tourism, Supreme Court judge, Justice B.V. Nagarathna, on Saturday said governments must refrain from approving wildlife safaris in forest sanctuaries and make critical habitats absolute no-go zones.

"There is a need to seriously consider declaring certain areas as inviolable. Regions such as biologically significant areas, heritage sites, bio-corridors, and eco-sensitive zones play a critical role in harbouring biodiversity, regulating local ecosystems, and mitigating climate change through carbon sequestration," Justice Nagarathna said.

The Supreme Court judge was delivering the Justice S.B. Sinha 4th Endowment Memorial Lecture at Ranchi.

B.V. Nagarathna

Specifically pointing to the environmental perils of tourism, the judge indicated that governments must categorically deny permission to human pleasure activities in sensitive zones.

The top court judge said the impacts of environmental degradation, like climate change, affect different strata of society differently. Environmental issues are deeply intertwined with questions of social, economic, and political justice, Justice Nagarathna pointed out.

Six leaders from Uttarakhand BJP join Cong. as party steps up attack on Dhami-led govt.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Six leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), including three former MLAs, from Uttarakhand joined the Congress in New Delhi on Saturday in the presence of party general secretary and State in-charge Kumari Selja.

The former MLAs are Rajkumar Thukral, Narayan Pal, and Bhimlal Arya, while the other three are Gaurav Goyal, Lakhan Singh, and Anuj Gupta.

Addressing a press conference, Ms. Selja said the leaders had reposed faith in the leadership of Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi. She claimed that the public's trust in the Congress was rising amid a growing dissatisfaction with the BJP government in the State.

Alleging widespread corruption under the BJP government, Ms. Selja said the ruling dispensation was "on the back foot" following protests by Congress workers that had received public support. She said attempts to "polish" the image of Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami had failed, with the "reality" of the leadership getting exposed before the people.

Switching sides: Leaders from Uttarakhand BJP joined the Congress in New Delhi on Saturday. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Ms. Selja said the Congress expected positive electoral gains in the State as public support continued to grow.

The induction of the leaders took place at the party headquarters in the presence of the State's Congress leaders, including Pradesh Congress Committee president Ganesh Godiyal, Leader of the Opposition Yashpal Arya, election campaign committee chairman Pritam Singh, election management committee head Harak Singh Rawat, and former PCC president Karan Mahara.

Former Raymond Group chairperson passes away at 87

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

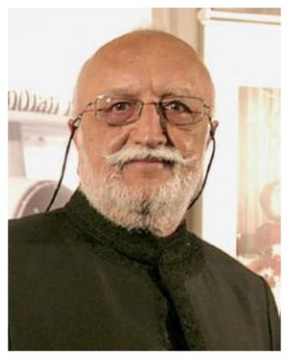
Vijaypat Singhania, recipient of Padma Bhusan, former chairman of Raymond Group and former Sheriff of Bombay, passed away in Mumbai on Saturday evening.

"A visionary leader, philanthropist, and an inspiring personality, whose legacy will continue to guide and inspire generations," the Raymond Group said in a statement.

He was best known for transforming the Raymond Group into a global fashion powerhouse.

Mr. Singhania took over the company in 1980 and expanded its portfolio to include textiles, steel, and hospitality.

He held the world record for highest altitude gained in a hot air balloon and winning the gold medal in an around-the-world air race.


Vijaypat Singhania

Singhania expanded the company's portfolio to include textiles, steel, and hospitality

Once he decided to take retirement and handed over the reins of Raymond to his son Gautam Singhania in 2015, their relationship soured, leading to a public feud.

Since then he and his wife had been living in a rented apartment.

His last rites will be performed on Sunday.

J&K House condemns attack on Abdullah

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

Jammu & Kashmir legislators, cutting across the political divide, on Saturday condemned the recent assassination attempt on ruling National Conference (NC) president Farooq Abdullah and demanded that the investigation report be made public

"I thank the House for condemning the assassination attempt on Dr. Farooq Abdullah (at a wedding party on March 11 in Jammu)... The investigating agencies, J&K Police and the Home Department are silent over the issue," Minister Sakina Itoo said. She made the statement in response to Peoples Democratic Party MLA Waheed ur Rehman Parra's demand to jointly condemn the assassination attempt.

Many legislators, however, flagged the thinning of security cover to Opposition leaders in J&K.

NDA will cross 90 seats in Assam: Shah

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) would retain power in Assam by winning more than 90 seats in the coming Assembly election, party leader and Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Saturday.

The NDA is contesting all 126 constituencies in Assam and the BJP has fielded candidates in 90 seats.

"A BJP-led NDA government will be formed here for the third straight term," Mr. Shah told journalists during a roadshow for the BJP's Guwahati Central candidate, Vijay Kumar Gupta. The wind was blowing in favour of the NDA in the State and the party and its allies would reap the dividends of the performance by the incumbent government led by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, he said.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah during a roadshow in Guwahati on Saturday. ANI

IUML takes its own decisions: Shihab Thangal

IUML Kerala State president Sayyid Sadiq Ali Shihab Thangal on Saturday denied allegations of Jamaat-e-Islami influence over the party, asserting that it is capable of taking independent decisions.

Responding to claims by CPI(M) leaders that Jamaat-e-Islami is controlling the IUML, Thangal said such allegations were baseless and made for political purposes.

"The League is fully capable of taking its own decisions. We do not depend on others for opinions or directions. All decisions are taken based on our own stand, and there are no other interests behind them," Thangal said.

When asked whether the decision to field IUML leader K.M. Shaji from Vengara was influenced by Jamaat-e-Islami, he rejected the claim. PTI

> The United Democratic Front is united and strong. We are heading towards a landslide victory with 100 seats in Keralam
>
> **RAHUL GANDHI**
> Congress leader

EC publishes 2nd supplementary Bengal voter list

The Election Commission of India (EC) published the second supplementary list under the SIR of electoral rolls in West Bengal, an official said. The poll panel, however, did not provide details on the total number of deletions or inclusions in the second list that was made public on Friday night. PTI

> BJP wants to blur the line between Bengali and Bangladeshi so they can import their hateful Assam-style detention camp model into Bengal
>
> **BRATYA BASU**
> Trinamool Congress leader

Poll partners: The AJUP and AIMIM have announced that they will hold more than a dozen joint rallies. ANI

AIMIM, AJUP highlight poor socio-economic condition of Bengal Muslims

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) leader Asaduddin Owaisi has announced that his party will contest the upcoming West Bengal Assembly election in alliance with Humayun Kabir's Aam Janata Unnayan Party (AJUP). He has also visited the State and addressed a press conference with Mr. Kabir by his side.

The announcement of the alliance assumes significance as it indicates a new churn in West Bengal politics ahead of the upcoming Assembly polls. One of the most crucial factors that will determine the outcome of the 2026 polls is whether the Muslims will continue to support Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee or shift their loyalties.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which has not fielded a single Muslim candidate so far, has already given up on the prospect of securing Muslims votes for the principal Opposition party in the State. Therefore, it is left to the Left parties, the Congress, the Indian Secular Front (ISF) and the new grouping of AIMIM and AJUP to seek the support of Muslims, who comprise 27% of the electorate.

The Trinamool Congress, under Ms. Banerjee's leadership, has retained the support of Muslims since 2011. But after three consecutive terms, the party is facing difficult questions. "She goes and offers prayers during Id. Does that fill the belly of Muslims?" Mr. Owaisi asked while addressing the media in Kolkata. The AIMIM leader said that the human development indicators of Muslim-dominated districts in West Bengal remain abysmally poor.

Representation and backwardness

Mr. Owaisi refused to be drawn into the debate over the construction of a mosque styled on Babri Masjid in Murshidabad, a project that has given political momentum to his ally Mr. Kabir. Instead, he spoke about the representation of Muslims in State government jobs. Mr. Owaisi said that the percentage of Muslims in government jobs stands at 7% whereas their population is 27%.

Mr. Owaisi and several other Muslim leaders of West Bengal referred to the Sachar Committee report, which revealed the socio-economic backwardness of the community during the Left Front rule.

During the 15 years of the Trinamool Congress rule, the number of Muslims in government jobs has remained low. The party has given ticket to 47 Muslim candidates out of 291 announced for the 294-seat Assembly – just about 16%, much lower than their population share.

Mr. Kabir launched his Aam Janata Unnayan Party in December 2025. By promoting the cause of a mosque styled on the Babri Masjid and accusing the Trinamool Congress leadership of only seeking Muslim votes and doing nothing for the socio-economic development of the community, Mr. Kabir has managed to gain political limelight. The AJUP leader has announced candidates for about 149 seats, including key constituencies like Bhabanipur and Nandigram. Mr. Kabir, who has influence in Murshidabad, will himself contest from two constituencies – Rejinagar and Naoda.

Though no seat-sharing deal has been finalised between the AJUP and AIMIM, both parties have announced that they would hold more than a dozen rallies together.

'BJP will get a historic mandate in Assam Assembly election this time'

Party will retain power with higher seat count than last time as the Opposition is not as united as they were in 2021, says BJP vice-president Baijayant 'Jay' Panda; Congress imploding and in complete disarray, with many more wanting to join the BJP, he adds; polling to be held in the State on April 9

INTERVIEW

Jay Panda

Nistula Hebbar
NEW DELHI

As the party in-charge for Assam, Mr. Panda spoke to *The Hindu* on a host of issues, including Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's policy regarding removal of land encroachments, the party's relationship with indigenous communities, and the criticism over several Congress leaders joining the party.

The BJP is looking to defend its 10 years at the helm of affairs in Assam, with its attendant issues and some inevitable anti-incumbency. How are you looking at the contest?
I disagree on anti-incumbency. On the contrary, there is a huge pro-incumbency. Prime Minister [Narendra] Modi has given an extreme focus to Assam and the Northeast, throughout his tenure as PM visiting the State 77 times. Compare that with his predecessor, [Dr. Manmohan Singh] who was actually technically representing Assam [as Rajya Sabha MP] but made only 10 visits in a similar time frame. This has translated to massive changes. The Railways has been giving five times the budget [allocation] from earlier, the number of bridges on the Brahmaputra have gone up. The number of medical colleges, there were only six [earlier], today we have 15 operational. Another six are under construction and another 10 are at a planning stage.

Another aspect is security. Before 2016, for many decades, Assam was known for its violence, militancy, lack of basic safety and security and as a result, lack of investment. There has again been a complete transformation. Home Minister Amit Shah has pushed through a Bodo Accord which has been implemented.

Assam has become the fastest growing State economy within India. If you take the State's average GDP growth rate, Assam is almost 50% higher than the national average. So, our slogan this time is '*Surakshit* Assam, *Viksit* Assam' [Safe Assam, Developed Assam]

SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

and you can see the response of the people.

This slogan actually brings me to another slogan that was floated in 2016, which was *'Khilonjia Sarkar'*, about indigenous communities and the indigenous identity of Assam. But over the last few years, we have seen a very sharp turn to hard Hindutva. How do you reconcile that?
The focus on the indigenous communities of Assam remains. That is why I gave you an example of the Bodo Accord. You have had other similar accords with other communities.

But what do you make of the rhetoric, especially Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's comments and social media posts of BJP Assam?
Different people have different ways of communicating. But if you go to the crux of the issue, it shows the Chief Minister strictly imposing the law, unfortunately leading to talk of polarisation. Two examples of this strict imposition of the law is with regard to a crackdown on child marriage and removal of land encroachments.

Child marriage is not permitted in our Constitution, it was being tolerated by the previous Congress regimes. Unfortunately, child marriage prevalence is far higher in certain communities, compared to the overall population. Now, Congress and some people are saying this is Hindutva, which it is not.

It is the implementation of the law.

Similarly, another such action which is yielding this kind of talk is the eviction of land grabbers. With perhaps some exceptions, most encroachers are illegal immigrants, encroaching forest and government land, and the land surrounding the *Namghars* and the *sattras*, the religio-cultural centres of Assamese culture.

At the time of the partition of India, we had only 11% of the demographic you are referring to, now it is up to 38%, not through natural means, but through illegal immigration.

This illegal immigration has happened in lakhs over more than seven decades, tolerated and facilitated by the previous governments due to vote bank politics. Now, the BJP-led NDA government and the very blunt Chief Minister has cracked down, imposed the law. So, these are the kind of actions that has led to this accusation of polarisation. Now, the CM may be blunt, but perhaps I can put it in sweeter words that people who break the law with such impunity should be afraid.

There are accusations that there has been a flood of entrants from the Congress, and that the Chief Minister is casting the State BJP in his own image?
This kind of talk is coming about because recently a few high-profile Congress people have joined us, like former Assam Congress chief Bhupen Borah, and Lok Sabha MP Pradyut Bordoloi. It shows that the Congress is imploding and is in complete disarray, with many more wanting to join the BJP. We have, however, been very selective. If you look at the tickets that have been given out, the vast majority have been people who have been in the BJP from the beginning, or who have been in the BJP for at least 10 years thus helping the party grow.

We are looking at a historic mandate for the BJP, far higher than what we won the last time as this time the Opposition is not as united as they were in 2021.

(Full interview: newsth.live/JayPandaInterview)

'Tarun Gogoi and Rahul Gandhi are responsible for giving Assam to BJP'

Congress lost power in the State because it created a foothold for the BJP, says AIUDF founder and chief Badruddin Ajmal; his party wants Himanta thrown out of power, but do not want the Congress to be the alternative, the perfume baron adds

INTERVIEW

Badruddin Ajmal

Rahul Karmakar
HOJAI

The All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) has been a minority-based political force in Assam since its birth in October 2005 after the Supreme Court scrapped an allegedly pro-immigrant law. The Congress saw the party as its prime adversary in the State for a decade before the BJP used it as a template for a grim future where so-called "Miya" (a pejorative term for Bengali-speaking migrants in Assam) Muslims dominate the indigenous communities.

Perfume baron Mohammed Badruddin Ajmal believes his party continues to be relevant in Assam's polarised political landscape, unlike its predecessor, the United Minorities Front (UMF), which ran out of steam in 20 years. Edited excerpts from an interview:

RITU RAJ KONWAR

Former Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi famously asked, 'Who is Ajmal?', when the AIUDF started its poll journey in 2006. Who or what is Badruddin Ajmal today?

Tarun Gogoi probably said that while relishing the Alphonso mangoes I used to gift him every year in crates. I used to be given a red-carpet welcome because his Congress government needed the votes of Bengali Muslims.

He saw me as a threat as soon as I entered politics and said he would finish me off in six months, like former Congress Chief Minister Hiteswar Saikia ended the UMF. I survived, and AIUDF became the second-largest party in 2011. I am still the same Badruddin Ajmal, but rival parties use my name and face to strike fear among the voters.

Has the AIUDF tacitly helped the BJP to end 15 years of Congress reign in Assam, as it has been alleged?

In the 2011 election, we won 18 seats, 10 more than our tally in 2006, while the Congress won 78 seats, 25 more than in the previous election. This proved that the Congress did not lose ground because of us, although we dented their minority support base. Congress lost power because it created a foothold for the BJP. Had Tarun Gogoi not wanted to establish his son [Gaurav Gogoi] as the Chief Minister, Himanta Biswa Sarma, who claimed the support of 56 MLAs, would not have revolted and switched to the BJP.

Tarun Gogoi and Rahul Gandhi are responsible for handing Assam to the BJP on a platter. Otherwise, the BJP's tally would not have jumped from five in 2011 to 60 in 2016. Congress could have extended its run if it had given a secular message by befriending us. We became allies for the 2021 polls, but lack of respect made us part ways.

The BJP uses your name to project a future where the so-called Miyas will rule. How do you feel?

Himanta Biswa Sarma is a *khiladi* [player]. He amplified the fear that the Congress created by projecting me as the enemy of the people of Assam. Himanta predicts doomsday by telling people that the Ajmal tsunami will sweep them away. The BJP, anyway, plays the Hindu card in a highly polarised atmosphere. We want Himanta Biswa Sarma thrown out of power, but we do not want the Congress to be the alternative. I am with Rahul Gandhi at the national level, not with the Congress in Assam.

Is AIUDF still relevant after failing to retain its three Lok Sabha seats in 2024 and a few MLAs later?

We are confident of maintaining our position at least. [The AIUDF won 16 seats in 2021.] I cannot say that of the Congress or its allies. The Congress is the B-team of the BJP, and the Chief Minister said that he planted 32 Congress candidates. Himanta is controlling the Congress and its ally, the Raijor Dal, whose president helped the BJP defeat Congress in 14 constituencies in 2021. The outcome of this polls can thus be predicted.

Assam BJP ousts 9 rebels contesting as Independents

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

The BJP unit in Assam has expelled nine leaders who rebelled against the party to contest the April 9 Assembly elections as Independent candidates. All nine were aspirants for party ticket.

In a notification issued on Friday, the BJP said the nine had been expelled for six years for indulging in anti-party activities.

They are Jayanta Kumar Das (Dispur constituency), Uddhab Chandra Das and Gagan Chandra Haloi (both Barpeta), Jitendrajit Goud (Kaliabor), Amalendu Das (Barkhola), Dhanjit Rabha (Goalpara West), Chakradhar Das (Bongaigaon), Ankur Das (Kamalpur), and Jashada Dulal Rakshit (Lumding).

Among the rebels, Jayanta Kumar Das has been the most vocal against the BJP for fielding a "Congress import", former MP Pradyut Bordoloi, from the Dispur seat.

The rebels are contesting against candidates fielded by either the BJP or its ally, Asom Gana Parishad. The BJP also terminated the primary membership of six party workers for allegedly acting against the party's interests.

INBRIEF

HC judges inspect Bhojshala Temple-Kamal Maula complex

Two Madhya Pradesh High Court judges inspected the Bhojshala Temple-Kamal Maula Mosque complex in Dhar on Saturday ahead of a hearing on April 2 related to the disputed 11th-century site. While Hindus consider it to be a temple of Vagadevi (Saraswati), the Muslim community calls its Kamal Maula Mosque. Justices Vijay Kumar Shukla and Alok Awasthi of the Indore Bench visited the premises under tight security, accompanied by district officials. "The judges had directed during the March 16 hearing that no petitioner should be present at the site during their visit. So we did not go," petitioner Ashish Goyal said. PTI

5 killed, 30 injured as tourist bus overturns in Odisha

At least five persons were killed and 30 injured when a tourist bus overturned in Odisha's Nayagarh district in the early hours of Saturday, the police said. The accident took place around 2 a.m. when the bus, carrying 55 passengers, overturned on the Hanuman Ghati road at Daspalla. "Speeding is suspected to be the reason for the accident. The bus overturned on Hanuman Ghati road while negotiating a curve," the police said. The deceased were all residents of Berhampur. Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi has announced ₹4 lakh *ex gratia* for the next of kin of the deceased. PTI

Tiger poisoned to death near Satpura Reserve; five arrested

A tiger from Madhya Pradesh's Satpura Tiger Reserve (STR) has been allegedly poisoned to death leading to arrest of five people in the case, officials said on Saturday. According to officials, the decomposed body of the female tiger was found buried outside the Reserve's boundary after which the forest officials swung into action. Satpura Field Director Rakhi Nanda said that the tiger had been rehabilitated from the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve in 2018 and had set up its territory outside the STR boundaries. Ms. Nanda said that the tiger had killed the main accused's oxen after which he along with some other locals mixed urea in the kill.

Great Indian Bustard hatches in Gujarat after a decade

A Great Indian Bustard (GIB) chick was born in Gujarat's Kutch after a decade through the jumpstart approach, a novel conservation initiative, Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav announced on Saturday. In a major trans-State conservation effort, a captive-bred egg from Rajasthan was replaced in the nest of a female GIB in Kutch of Gujarat, where there was no possibility of having a fertile egg with only three female GIBs surviving. The chick successfully hatched on March 26, and a field monitoring team is observing the young chick in its natural habitat, the Minister said. He described this as a significant achievement in the recovery of the critically endangered species.

SUDOKU

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

5	4	1	3	9	7	8	6	2
6	3	8	2	1	4	7	9	5
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4	8	9	1	6	2	5	3	7
3	7	5	8	4	9	6	2	1
9	5	2	4	3	8	1	7	6
8	6	4	7	2	1	3	5	9
7	1	3	9	5	6	2	8	4

Avalanche toll hits 7; Zojila Pass traffic comes under scrutiny

Body of a missing person recovered on Saturday while one dies in hospital; authorities issue avalanche warnings; officials question traffic timing, mixing of light and heavy motor vehicles in one of the most dangerous highways in the country

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

A snow-cutter blower clearing snow following multiple avalanches that hit the Srinagar-Leh national highway near Zojila Pass, in Jammu and Kashmir. PTI

The death toll in the Zojila Pass avalanche touched seven on Saturday, even as questions were raised over traffic regulations along the Ladakh-Kashmir axis, one of the most dangerous and unpredictable highways in the country at an elevation of 2,528 metres.

The body of a missing civilian, identified as Ali Akbar Shadab, was recovered on Saturday during the search operation which resumed at 6 a.m. before concluding later in the day. Two women were among the dead, officials said.

"A total of 13 people were impacted in the avalanche. Five people were reported dead on Friday. One critically injured was shifted to the Kargil hospital, but died on Saturday. The seventh body was recovered from the avalanche site in the morning. Six people remain under treatment," said Dr. Sajjad Hussain, Block Medical Officer, Drass.

Officials said the rescue operation was carried out by teams of the civil administration, Army, and Border Road Organisation (BRO). Several vehicles buried under snow were tracked and removed from the Srinagar-Leh highway, the only surface link between Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. The highway remains highly prone to avalanches, landslides, and shooting stones for the most part of the year.

Authorities in Kashmir on Saturday warned of a potential avalanche risk over the next 24 hours in Ganderbal district, home to the Zojila Pass, and in Bandipora district.

The advisory issued by the Ganderbal Deputy Commissioner warned that "there was a medium intensity risk of avalanche above 2400 metres in Ganderbal".

"People have been strictly advised to avoid venturing into avalanche-prone areas, including steep slopes, hilly terrain, and higher reaches, until further orders are issued. The administration has also appealed to residents, tourists, and nomadic communities to adhere to official guidelines and cooperate in ensuring public safety," the advisory said.

The civilian deaths in Friday's avalanche have brought the traffic management on the Srinagar-Ladakh highway, which remained closed for traffic on Saturday, under a scanner.

The avalanche was apparently triggered due to a rise in the temperature due to the hot sun at noon. The accident took place between half past noon and 1 p.m., officials said.

"March is an avalanche-prone month. We local people understand that allowing traffic around 5.30 a.m. from the Kargil side for two hours and then from 8 a.m. up to 10 a.m. from the Kashmir side makes it safe. Because chances of avalanche during the morning hours are minimum," said Mohammad Jaffer Akhoon, Chief Executive Councillor, Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Kargil.

At present, traffic along the 25-kilometre stretch is allowed after 8 a.m.

Mr. Akhoon also flagged the issue of mixing up heavy motor vehicles with light motor vehicles. "Advisory suggests that heavy motor vehicles are only allowed after the light motor vehicles. However, both were present when the avalanche hit on Friday," he said.

The CEC said the issue will be raised with Ladakh Lieutenant-Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena and officials in Jammu and Kashmir.

Odisha BJP MLA fires his security officer's gun

The Hindu Bureau
BHUBANESWAR

Odisha Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLA Nabin Kumar Jain allegedly fired gunshots in the air, reportedly as part of celebratory firing on the occasion of Ram Navami.

A large crowd had gathered in the western town of Titlagarh for the festivities when Mr. Jain is said to have 'taken' a pistol from his personal security officer (PSO) and discharged several rounds.

A Ram Navami procession from Titlagarh's Radha Krishna Temple, with people of all ages –including children dressed as Ram, Sita, Lakshman, and Hanuman –traversed the town.

While some did not hear the gunshots, others were left shocked by the incident. Balangir Superintendent of Police has sought a report from the PSO.

The Biju Janta Dal (BJD) took strong exception to the alleged firing by a sitting BJP MLA. Addressing a press meet here, senior BJD leader and Titlagarh MLA Tukuni Sahu strongly criticised the State government over the deteriorating law and order situation.

PM inaugurates Noida International Airport; operations yet to begin

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath, and others at the Noida International Airport at Jewar. PTI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday formally inaugurated the National Capital Region's second airport, the Noida International Airport.

Addressing the gathering, Mr. Modi said the launch signalled the beginning of a transformative phase for both the State and the country. "Today we are starting a new chapter for a developed Uttar Pradesh and a developed India," he said.

Though flights were earlier slated to begin in October 2025, the start of operations at the airport is yet to be announced. Saturday's inauguration comes just four years after the foundation stone was laid in November 2021. The concession deal for the project was signed in 2020 with Swiss firm Zurich Airport International AG.

The project involves an investment of ₹11,200 crore. In its first phase, it will handle 12 million passengers annually with a single runway, while the long-term plan envisages a capacity of 70 million passengers per year and up to six runways. He said that the project would unlock fresh opportunities for farmers, small and medium enterprises, and the youth in western Uttar Pradesh. "Flights from here will connect directly to the world, and the airport will stand as a symbol of a developed Uttar Pradesh taking flight," he said.

He said the airport will serve a vast catchment spanning Agra, Mathura, Aligarh, Ghaziabad, Meerut, Etawah, Bulandshahr and Faridabad, significantly expanding connectivity across the region.

Mr. Modi said the ongoing global situation remains a cause for concern, pointing to the conflict in West Asia that has persisted for over a month and disrupted supplies of essential commodities such as food, petrol, diesel, gas and fertilizers in several countries.

Noting that India imports a significant share of its crude oil and gas from the region, he said, "Every possible step is being taken to ensure that the burden of this crisis does not fall on ordinary families and farmers."

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said the airport would help develop a dedicated multimodal cargo hub, enabling the State to overcome the limitations of being landlocked and connect more easily with global markets.

Defeat makes one lose control, says SP on PM Modi's jibe

Mayank Kumar
LUCKNOW

Akhilesh Yadav

"When defeat becomes apparent, a person loses control over their words," the Samajwadi Party (SP) said on Saturday, hitting out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi for accusing the party of turning Noida into an "ATM for loot".

Mr. Modi was speaking after inaugurating Phase 1 of the Noida International Airport in Gautam Buddha Nagar of Uttar Pradesh on Saturday.

The Opposition party said Noida had evolved as an economic engine because of planned industrial clusters, affordable housing, metro connectivity, and opportunities for small and medium enterprises initiated by the previous SP government.

"He comes to our State as a guest; we will treat him as a guest and send him off with respect. The words of those who are leaving are not taken unkindly. When defeat becomes apparent, a person loses all respect for their position and control over their words. Respecting age and position is in our culture and will always be. Respectful farewell," SP president Akhilesh Yadav wrote on X.

NMC launches online feedback system for UG medical students

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The National Medical Commission (NMC) has for the first time launched an online feedback system for undergraduate medical students to anonymously register complaints or evaluate their colleges' infrastructure and faculty.

In an order, the NMC said it has made live an online 'Student Feedback Form', seeking inputs from undergraduate students of medical colleges and institutions under its purview.

"This feedback aims to gather valuable anonymous feedback on various aspects of your medical college and medical education experience. The form covers aspects such as quality of teaching and lecture, faculty availability and adequacy, clinical training, and patient exposure, lab dissection halls and practical training community medicine and rural training, campus culture/student welfare etc.," it said.

The commission said the responses would remain confidential. "The feedback is being collected solely for internal academic review and quality improvement purposes."

The online form can be accessed through the NMC website. Communication from the NMC has been sent to Additional Chief Secretaries and Principal Secretaries of medical education departments of all States and Union Territories, and directors, deans and principals of all medical colleges. The notice was issued on Thursday.

CRPF officer who lost leg in line of duty battling pain, stagnant career

Vijaita Singh
ROHTAK

Azad Singh, father of Assistant Commandant Ajay Malik.

Azad Singh says his son is barely able to sleep these days. With doctors stopping his painkillers, every day now seems a battle for him.

On March 1, his son Ajay Malik, an Assistant Commandant with the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), lost one of his legs when he stepped on an improvised explosive device (IED), while leading an anti-Maoist operation in the Saranda forest in Jharkhand. He was airlifted to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in Delhi where the doctors advised amputation of the left leg.

After Union Home Minister Amit Shah announced that left-wing extremism will be eradicated from the country by March 31, the security forces had stepped up anti-Maoist operations to meet the deadline. Since 2015, at least 50 CRPF personnel have lost their limbs in anti-Maoist operations.

"Doctors have taken my son off painkillers as its prolonged usage can impact other organs. He sleeps barely for 15-20 minutes at a stretch before he is woken up by excruciating pain," said Mr. Singh, who retired as a supervisor from the Department of Posts.

Mr. Singh said his son joined the CRPF in 2011 and received the President's Police Medal for Gallantry in 2022, but is yet to see a single promotion. "That has not affected his morale. Given a chance, he would go back to join the security operations," he said.

The CRPF and six other security organisations come under the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF). Retired CAPF personnel say that for officials, most times, the first promotion comes only after 15 to 18 years of service.

They have hence opposed a Bill introduced in the Rajya Sabha on March 25 that will enable reservation of a substantial number of key posts in the CAPF to Indian Police Service (IPS) officers on deputation. Mr. Malik is a Group A officer of the CRPF. Both the CAPF and the IPS are under the administrative control of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

The retired personnel and also Opposition parties have said that despite leading operations from the front and several of them killed in the line of action, CAPF officials face career stagnation.

Mr. Singh said, "When they are not promoted it hurts us. Many families protested at Jantar Mantar (in Delhi) a few days ago against the injustice to CAPF personnel. My son's friends who joined the Army the same year as him, are Colonels now."

INBRIEF

Govt. revises PM E-DRIVE scheme, sets new deadlines

The government has revised the PM Electric Drive Revolution in Innovative Vehicle Enhancement (PM E-DRIVE) Scheme to set new deadlines and unit caps for e-scooters and e-rickshaws. The Centre has revised the guidelines under the ₹10,900 crore PM E-DRIVE scheme, whereby electric two-wheelers registered till July 31, 2026 and electric three-wheelers (e-rickshaws and e-carts) registered till March 31, 2028, shall be eligible for incentives. The maximum ex-factory price to avail an incentive is capped at ₹1.5 lakh for electric two-wheelers and ₹2.5 lakh for electric three-wheelers (e-rickshaws and e-carts). The PM E-DRIVE Scheme is a fund-limited scheme. The total payout under the Scheme shall be limited to the scheme outlay of ₹10,900 crore. PTI

Sammaan Capital all set for stake acquisition by Avenir

Sammaan Capital Ltd., formerly Indiabulls Housing Finance Ltd., [Company] said it has received all approvals for majority stake acquisition by Avenir Investment RSC Ltd., which is owned and controlled by International Holding Company PJSC. The company and the investor are now engaged to conclude the proposed transaction at the earliest. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) recently approved the applications made by Sammaan Asset Management Ltd., (SAML) which is a wholly owned subsidiary of the company. For the proposed transaction, the company had previously received requisite approvals from the shareholders, the lenders/creditors, the stock exchanges, the Competition Commission of India, and the RBI. "Now with the receipt of the SEBI approvals, all regulatory approvals for consummation of the Proposed Transaction are in place," the company said in a filing.

House panel flags 32 times rise in sugarcane arrears

Govt. blames excess sugar production for delay in payments to farmers, says it is encouraging sugar mills to divert excess sugarcane to ethanol to address the problem of surplus sugar

A. M. Jigeesh
NEW DELHI

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, headed by DMK MP Kanimozhi Karunanidhi, has flagged about 32 times increase, compared with last financial year, in the sugarcane arrears owed to farmers across the country.

Farmers' organisations have demanded the Union Government's intervention to claim their dues as the next crop season is about to begin.

A report on the Demands for Grants of the Union Department of Food and Public Distribution, tabled in both the Houses during the ongoing budget session, noted that the Department intimated the panel that that total amount of cane price arrears in the country as on February 16, 2026 was ₹16,087 crore.

The sugarcane arrears on the same period in 2024-25 was ₹497 crore and in 2023-24, it was ₹34 crore. In 2025-26, the amount payable to farmers was ₹79,818 crore, of which ₹63,731 crore has been paid and the remaining amount to be paid is ₹16,087 crore (79.85%), according to the information provided in the report.

In Uttar Pradesh, the arrears rose from ₹24 crore in 2023-24 to ₹321 crore in 2024-25 and ₹3,287 crore in 2025-26, an increase of more than 10 times. In Maharashtra, it was ₹2 crore, ₹123 crore and ₹4,252 crore in 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26 respectively. Karnataka has the highest arrears.

Bitter pill: In the last two financial years, the arrears was zero and on February 16 this year, the arrears stood at ₹4,956 crore.

> Farmers had to face two problems — one, the harvest was bad due to diseases and production came down
>
> **SHUBHAM MALIK,** Spokesman, Bharatiya Kisan Union

In the last two financial years, the arrears were zero and on February 16 this year, the arrears were ₹4,956 crore. In Gujarat, the arrears increased from ₹5 crore to ₹1,402 crore.

In Tamil Nadu, the amount due to farmers is ₹203 crore and in Bihar it is ₹212 crore. Haryana owes ₹373 crore and Punjab's arrears is ₹535 crore. Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Telangana owe ₹366 crore, ₹235 crore and ₹152 crore each to sugarcane farmers.

Farmers organisations have questioned the delay in payment. Senior leader of All India Kisan Sabha from Maharashtra Ajit Nawale told *The Hindu* that the reason given to the farmers was that the sugar prices are down as exports have decreased making the sugar mills unable to pay the fair remuneration price to sugarcane to farmers.

"We were told that the cooperative sugar mills in Maharashtra have sought the government's help. The payments owed to farmers are stuck in this. We have been protesting demanding government's intervention to resolve the crisis of farmers," Mr. Nawale said.

Spokesman of Bharatiya Kisan Union in Shamli District, Uttar Pradesh, and a young sugarcane farmer Shubham Malik said the ground reality was much worse. "The real statistics of sugarcane arrears must be bigger than what was informed by the government. Farmers had to face two problems – one, the harvest was bad due to diseases and production came down. Secondly, we did not get the prices for the sugarcane. Farmers are already feeling insecure due to the deal announced with the United States. If the government does not help us to receive the money due to us, things are going to be very difficult," Mr. Malik said.

The panel noted that in every sugar season, production of sugar was about 300-330 lakh metric tonnes (LMT) as against the domestic consumption of 270-290 LMT, which results in a huge carry-over stock of sugar with mills.

"This excess stock leads to blockage of funds and affects the liquidity of sugar mills resulting in delayed payment of cane dues and ultimately resulting in accumulation of cane arrears," the report said.

The government told the panel that to address the problem of excess sugar and reduction of cane arrears to the farmers, it is encouraging sugar mills to divert excess sugarcane to ethanol.

"Further, minimum support price of sugar was also revised from ₹29- per kg to ₹31 per kg along with the imposition of stock-holding limits on the sugar mills," the panel noted.

Two Indian LPG ships, one Pak. oil carrier cross Strait of Hormuz

M. Kalyanaraman
CHENNAI

Tyr and Elm, owned by BW LPG India, together are said to be carrying cargo of about 93,000 tonnes

BW Tyr and BW Elm, two Indian flagged LPG carriers, crossed the Strait of Hormuz on Saturday, as per ship tracker websites. They were among the five Indian LPG carriers anchored north of Dubai-Ras Al Khaima on Friday.

P. Aliki, a Greek-owned crude oil carrier of more than 1 lakh tonne capacity, also crossed the strait on Saturday. P. Aliki, chartered by the Pakistan National Shipping Corporation, loaded at Ras Tanura in Saudi Arabia, and is scheduled to dock at Karachi in Pakistan for discharging. Tyr and Elm, owned by BW LPG India, a subsidiary of the well-known BW Group, have a combined cargo carrying capacity of more than 1,06,000 tonnes.

The two together are said to be carrying cargo of about 93,000 tonnes, as per a reliable source – equivalent to three days of current LPG import requirements. While BW Elm's intended destination as of last week was New Mangaluru Port, Tyr's was Mumbai.

The three other Indian LPG carriers anchored southwest of the strait have a combined cargo of some 80,000 tonnes of LPG. They are owned by Great Eastern Shipping Company of India and the Indian operations of Mitsui OSK Lines of Japan.

Iranian authorities who give explicit approvals for ships to pass through the strait have been insisting that the ships hugged the Iranian coast and went around Iran's Larak Island so as to get visual confirmation of the affiliation of the vessel.

"Ship-tracking data shows the three vessels that transited on Saturday took the new IRGC-controlled route around Iran's Larak Island and through the Islamic Republic's territorial waters as they sailed outbound through the Strait of Hormuz," says Toomer Raanan, maritime risk analyst at Lloyd's List, a provider of news, analysis and data to global shipping. Saturday's transit of two India-bound ships and one Pakistan-bound vessel, came as a surprise since, on Friday, Iran had apparently turned away three ships linked to China.

Two of them served Saudi ports. Iran had earlier indicated that ships with affiliations to India, Pakistan, Iran, Thailand, China and Russia can transit the strait. Meanwhile, Greek-owned crude oil tanker, Marathi, carrying some 1 million barrels of crude oil from Ras Tanura docked in Sikka on Thursday after transiting the strait earlier. So far, six Indian LPG carriers have crossed the chokepoint.

Andhra Pradesh poised for a leap in shipbuilding and ship repair cluster

V. Raghavendra
Sumit Bhattacharjee
VIJAYAWADA
VISAKHAPATNAM

The potential for development of a shipbuilding and repair cluster in Andhra Pradesh, which has India's second longest coastline after Gujarat, has been a wasted opportunity for decades but the State government is closer to realising it than ever before.

What has come as a boost to the State's plans to put its resource – a rich, 1,053-km-long coast to optimum use, is the push given by the Centre to develop the shipbuilding sector as part of its Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047.

Going into the specifics, the Centre identified Dugarajapatnam in Tirupati district as one of the five key sites for its ambitious shipbuilding cluster initiative, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Odisha and Maharashtra being the others.

Setting sail: The proposed shipbuilding clusters will add to the existing capacity at Hindustan Shipyard, Visakhapatnam. K.R. DEEPAK

'Global shipyard'

In line with India's maritime vision, the A.P. Government had resolved to establish a 'global shipyard' to cater to the present as well as future demand with the underlying objective of having a 25% share in the national ship building capacity by 2047.

Towards achieving it, the Government of AP (GoAP) had late last year approved the AP Maritime Policy 2024-29.

In a significant step forward, the GoAP formed a SPV named National Shipbuilding & Heavy Industries Park Andhra Pradesh Limited (NSHIP-AP Ltd.) under the provisions of Companies Act, 2013 earlier this month for developing the common infrastructure (dredging, waterfront, dry docks, and utilities) and leasing the land to private shipbuilders in the Dugarajapatnam cluster.

Prior to this, the AP Maritime Board (APMB) had entered into an MoU with the Visakhapatnam Port Authority (VPA) for implementing the project. Besides, APMB had, during the CII Partnership Summit, 2025, signed MoUs with Defence PSUs Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL), Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Limited (GRSE), and Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL), to have them as the anchor investors not only for the Dugarajapatnam cluster, but also smaller shipbuilding facilities at places like Kakinada, which incidentally had centuries-old legacy in shipbuilding.

Dugarajapatnam cluster is targeted to have a 1.20 Million Gross Tonnage capacity per year.

Other locations being explored for the development of shipbuilding and repair facilities are Srikakulam and Visakhapatnam (Gangavaram) districts.

APMB CEO Abhishek Kumar told *The Hindu* that the government had not only planned to develop a mega shipbuilding yard at Dugarajapatnam, but also promote smaller units at other places.

3,500 acres of land has been identified for the Dugarajapatnam cluster, including downstream industries, and the process of acquisition has begun. Highly-placed sources at the Centre's Infrastructure & Investments Department said, in-principle clearance has been given to the project and search is on for a PPP partner.

Machilipatnam cluster

This apart, the GoAP had last month published a Request for Proposal to develop another shipbuilding cluster at Machilipatnam and set April 15 as the deadline for submitting tenders. On March 12, IT & HRD Minister Nara Lokesh laid the foundation for an autonomous maritime shipyard and systems development centre to be developed by Sagar Defence Engineering with an initial investment of ₹45 crore at Juvvaladinne fishing harbour in Nellore district.

The proposed shipbuilding clusters will add to the existing capacity at the Hindustan Shipyard (HSL) in Visakhapatnam, which is India's oldest and first modern shipbuilding yard established in 1941 by the Scindia Steam Navigation Company Ltd., nationalised and renamed later.

From its humble origins as a conventional shipbuilder, the HSL facility transformed into a comprehensive maritime solutions provider, delivering commercial ships, complex Naval platforms, submarine refits, ship repairs, and technologically advanced vessels such as INS Dhruv, which is a research vessel and missile range instrumentation ship.

Steeped in losses for several years, HSL is now registering profits, with its turnover rising from ₹574 crore in 2019-20 to ₹1,471 crore in 2024-25.

Ongoing projects

HSL delivered two strategically important projects to the Indian Navy – INS Nistar, a Diving Support Vessel (first of its class), in July 2025, and a floating dock in December 2025.

HSL's ongoing projects include one diving support vessel and five fleet support ships for the Indian Navy and it has emerged as L1 for the construction of 18 next-generation fast patrol vessels.

HSL is also actively exploring opportunities for normal and medium refits of submarines.

Preparatory activities for undertaking the Medium Refit Life Certification of INS Sindhuvijay at HSL, the first time in India, are being expedited.

Visakhapatnam also houses the strategic high-security submarine-building unit known as the Ship Building Centre under the Ministry of Defence.

This highly secretive yard, within the Eastern Naval Command, specialises in the indigenous construction of nuclear powered submarines.

IIT-Kgp, PRL team decodes moon's titanium-rich rocks

Vasudevan Mukunth

While volcanic rocks on earth rarely contain more than 2% titanium dioxide, some lunar basalts carry up to 18%, a fact planetary scientists have struggled to explain. New work by IIT-Kharagpur and Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad, published recently in *Geochimica et Cosmochimica Acta*, has offered one explanation.

ISRO's Chandrayaan-4 mission will collect lunar rock samples and return them to earth. The study's findings could help inform the choice of landing site by identifying locations carrying the chemical fingerprints of the moon's interior.

According to first author Himela Moitra, "High-resolution microscopic cameras on landers can help identify minerals in lunar rocks, while instruments such as X-ray fluorescence and X-ray diffraction can determine their chemical composition before collection." Study coauthor Tamalkanti Mukherjee added: "Spectroscopic tools such as Raman and visible-near infrared spectroscopy can help confirm the mineral phases in rocks before they are collected."

Some 4.3 billion years ago, the moon was cooling from a global ocean of molten rock. Minerals called olivine and orthopyroxene crystallised first, then plagioclase, and finally the titanium-rich ilmenite-bearing cumulate (IBC) layer.

IBC was dense. As it sank through the magnesium-rich mantle, it heated up and melted. The resulting titanium-rich partial melts are believed to be the source of the moon's titanium-rich basalts, but the exact mechanism has been contested.

In one set of experiments, the team placed a thin synthetic IBC layer above a mix of minerals resembling the moon's mantle, inside an apparatus that could mimic the extreme conditions where the sinking layer met the mantle. In a second set, the team blended the materials together and exposed them to similar conditions.

The results suggested that basalts high in titanium were created in a complex process involving both reactions and mixing. The first set of tests yielded melts high in titanium dioxide but low in magnesium oxide while the second set produced basalts too rich in magnesium and too low in titanium. When the team simulated a combination of these processes, they found some molten rocks could have risen and erupted with moderate amounts of titanium while those rich in titanium could have become stuck inside the moon. Later, fresh magma rising from below could have mixed with these trapped pockets and the combined mass could have erupted as titanium-rich lava.

Heart disease compounded by erratic treatment access in India

For millions of heart patients in India, distance to healthcare centre, lack of equipment and specialists, and high costs of treatment contribute to long delays and cause preventable deaths

Swagata Yadavar

On a February morning, Jassuram Khanna, a farmer from Sujau village in Chakrata, Uttarakhand, felt a tightness in his chest on his way to the market. After waiting a few minutes, his son hired a private car and took him to the local Primary Health Centre (PHC), where a health worker checked his blood pressure and referred him to Vikasnagar, a town 55 km away.

At the Community Health Centre (CHC) in Vikasnagar, however, no doctor was available. Finally, around 3 pm, they reached a charitable hospital in Dharmawala, about 70 km from his hometown, where an ECG confirmed Jassuram had suffered a heart attack.

A subsequent angiogram revealed one of his heart vessels was fully blocked. An angioplasty – where a balloon widened the blocked vessel and a stent was placed to restore blood flow – followed. From his first symptoms at 10:30 am to the ECG, 4.5 hours had elapsed, followed by another 40 minutes before the angioplasty.

Experts however recommend a patient with a heart attack to undergo an ECG and have it interpreted within 10 minutes of contacting a medical team. However, Jassuram's experience echoes what patients face in many parts of India.

Heart disease accounts for 28.6 lakh deaths a year in India. Indians typically develop heart disease nearly a decade earlier than Western populations while mortality rates from heart attacks are higher. Despite advances in medical infrastructure, timely emergency response remains inconsistent.

Cardiologists often like to repeat the phrase 'time is muscle': every minute's delay in being treated increases the risk of irreversible death of the heart muscle. Restoring blood supply to the heart can reduce damage to the heart and improve survival rates. The most critical time for intervention is within 1-3 hours of an attack and the ideal time to conduct an angioplasty is within 2 hours of the first medical contact.

However, most Indian patients reach the hospital between 6 hours on average and up to 12 hours in the hilly States.

The reasons for delay follow.

Lack of awareness: a 2023 study audited deaths due to acute cardiac events or stroke among those aged 30-69 years in Faridabad, finding that only 11% reached an appropriate health facility within an hour. Many failed to recognise symptoms or underestimated their severity. Others faced barriers such as a lack of transport, absence of attendants or reaching facilities unequipped to handle cardiac emergencies. Financial constraints also contributed.

Unlike district hospitals and CHCs, PHCs also often lack ECG machines despite being the first point of contact in rural areas, and despite the National Essential Diagnostic List recommending its presence. As a result, patients must travel long distances for basic diagnostic tests.

Even after a diagnosis, access to definitive treatment poses challenges. Angioplasty requires specialised infrastructure such as catheterisation laboratories, or cath labs, and trained cardiologists. India has roughly 2,500 cath labs, most concentrated in urban areas and in the States of Maharashtra, Kerala, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, and Delhi. Nearly 90% are in the private sector, leaving large parts of the country underserved.

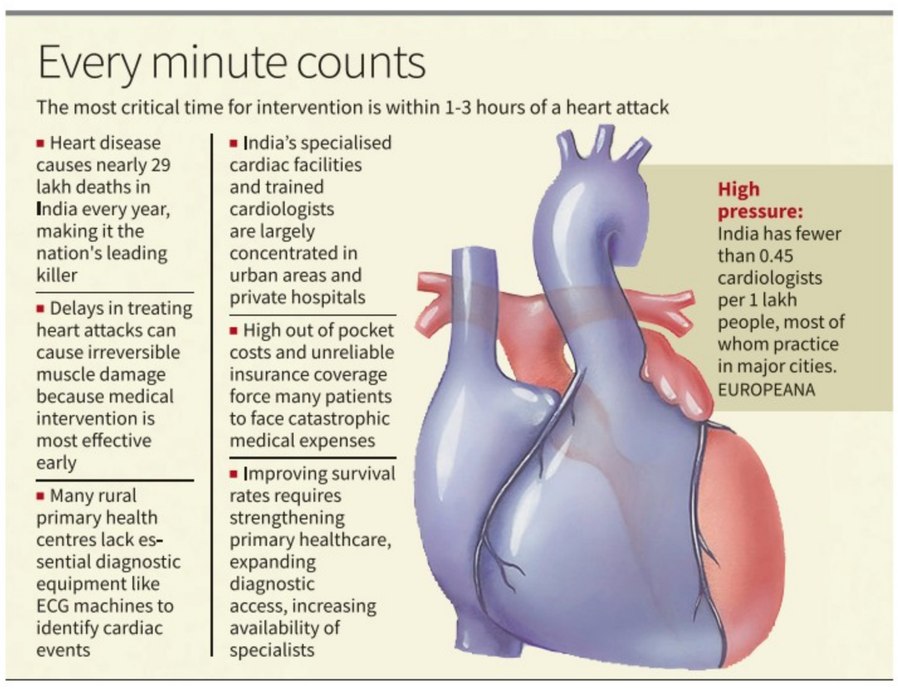
Public hospitals with cath labs are often overcrowded, leading to long waiting times. Hospital workers also underutilise alternative treatments such as thrombolysis, which uses clot-dissolving drugs, because non-specialist doctors may hesitate to administer them due to potential complications without cardiology support. India also faces a shortage of cardiologists, with fewer than 0.45 per 100,000 people, most of whom practice in major cities. Due to limited public facilities and long queues, many patients turn to private hospitals, incurring high out-of-pocket expenses. Nearly half of heart patients face catastrophic health expenditure during hospitalisation while many also struggle with paying outpatient costs.

Government schemes intended to reduce this burden are not always reliable. Patients often report being denied treatment under public insurance programs like ABPMJAY at private hospitals, forcing them to travel to distant public facilities.

Bridging these gaps requires strengthening primary healthcare, expanding diagnostic access, increasing specialist availability, and ensuring that financial protection schemes function effectively.

Until then, for many Indians, surviving a heart attack will continue to depend not just on medical science, but on geography, timing, and chance.

(This article is part of a series on the health system's response to emergency cardiac care in India – a project of Nivarana, India's first digital public health platform, with support from Sunfox Technologies. Read the longer version: https://newsth.live/hearthealth)



Why AI mandates are undermining adoption

DECODED

John Xavier

The way offices work has always changed in waves, but the last three decades delivered something different – a pace of change that didn't allow people to settle before the next disruption arrived. Paper files gave way to desktops. Desktops to laptops. Laptops to phones that did almost everything.

I remember being handed a BlackBerry and a laptop in 2007. Neither felt like a burden. They felt like an upgrade. Not everyone had them. The colleague who could reply to an email from an airport lounge, who could approve a document without being in the building, had something others wanted. These devices didn't arrive as mandates. Nobody was told to use them or face consequences. That distinction is important as a growing number of companies are executing AI mandates at scale.

E-commerce platform Shopify told employees that opting out of AI was, in effect, opting out of a future at the company. Language learning platform Duolingo announced it would stop using contractors for any work AI could handle. Crypto exchange Coinbase was even blunter, asking its engineers to adopt AI coding tools. The message from the corner office, across company after company, has been some version of: use this or lose your seat.

What happened next should not be surprising to anyone who has spent time thinking about how people actually behave at work as reports suggest an increasing proportion of employees quietly doing the opposite – skipping training, feeding AI systems bad inputs to game the metrics, and reverting to manual processes. Among Gen Z workers, the generation most assumed to be inherently comfortable with digital tools, that number is climbing. Something has gone wrong.

Psychological safety is the condition underneath all the others, the ground on which everything else gets built. REUTERS

To understand it, you have to revisit a concept that organisational psychologists call 'psychological safety.' Research shows that teams perform well not simply when they have the right tools or the right incentives, but when they feel genuinely safe – safe to take risks, to admit they don't know something, to speak up when something seems wrong, without fearing they'll be punished for any of it. Psychological safety is the condition underneath all the others, the ground on which everything else gets built.

A top-down AI mandate, issued under threat, is almost perfectly designed to undermine it. When a CEO frames AI as a mechanism for doing more with less, and that same quarter sees layoffs, employees don't experience the rollout as a productivity tool, but as surveillance device. The issue has never been technology; but in how organisations approach change management. Meaningful adoption follows a different path: one that involves frontline workers in the design before anything gets built, that communicates honestly about what change means for jobs rather than burying the answer in corporate language, that invests in building genuine competence rather than demanding performance of it, and that treats scepticism as something worth understanding rather than something to be overridden.

The companies that could truly see real results will be the ones that ask its workers first and then build around those answers. They will view AI tools usage and headcount reductions as two different mutually exclusive problems. Their change management programmes will be tailored towards building new skills with confidence. That in turn will make employees approach AI tools as an enabler and not a threat.

The mandate-heavy approach reveals a category error at the leadership level – the mistake of treating a cultural and psychological challenge as though it were a process re-engineering problem. An organisation that measures transformation by how many tokens its employees consumed has clearly misplaced its priorities.

The AI reckoning that companies are navigating is about whether the people leading organisations have learned anything at all about how humans change.

SNAPSHOTS

Microgravity can alter sperm's ability to navigate

Researchers used a device that mimicked the weightlessness of space to check how microgravity affected human, mouse, and pig cells. They found microgravity impaired sperm's ability to navigate but also that high doses of progesterone could partially reverse this impairment. Up to 24 hours of microgravity also delayed mouse and pig embryo development. As countries plan missions to the moon and Mars, the findings show reproductive processes are vulnerable to gravitational changes.

Egypt find bridges African, Eurasian ape fossil records

Palaeontologists have found a new fossil ape species, *Masripithecus moghraensis*, in northern Egypt based on 18-million-year-old jaw remains – the first definitive fossil ape found in North Africa. Previously, researchers found most Early Miocene ape fossils in East Africa. The find suggests the ancestors of all living apes may have originated in northeastern Afro-Arabia. Genetic analysis placed *Masripithecus* closer to modern apes than other fossils from the era, linking African and Eurasian fossil records.

Team uses recirculating water to inject CO2 into rocks

In the arid Jizan region of Saudi Arabia, scientists have shown a way to 'trap' CO2 without using external water sources. Mineral storage usually consumes lots of water. But in the demo, scientists pumped water from one well and reinjected it into another 130 m away, and over 10 months moved 131 tonnes of CO2 dissolved in water into basaltic rocks. They also confirmed that 70% of the CO2 was converted to solid carbonate minerals in this time.

Question Corner

Sum over the parts

If hydrogen is combustible and oxygen aids combustion, how can water put out fires?
– *Debajyoti Debbarma*

Compounds often behave differently than their constituent elements. Hydrogen is indeed a highly flammable gas and oxygen supports combustion, but when they bond together chemically, they transform into water. This chemical reaction actually involves burning the hydrogen. When hydrogen reacts with oxygen, it releases a large amount of energy and leaves water behind as a stable by-product.

In this sense, you can view water as the chemical ash of a hydrogen fire.

When you pour water onto a flame, the liquid absorbs heat as it turns into steam, depriving the fire of the thermal energy it needs to sustain the chemical reaction. The rapidly expanding steam displaces the surrounding air and cuts off the fire's oxygen supply. However, water doesn't work on every type of fire. Certain reactive metals can strip the oxygen atoms out of water molecules and release pure hydrogen gas. Water conducts electricity, so using it on electrical equipment carries the risk of electrocution.

Readers may send their questions / answers to science@thehindu.co.in

Why is there controversy over the CAPF Bill?

Why was the Bill introduced in the Rajya Sabha? Why is there opposition to it? What is the government's justification?

Vijaita Singh

The story so far:

The Central Armed Police Forces (General Administration) Bill, 2026 was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on March 25. The Bill states that in the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), 50% of the total posts in the rank of Inspector General, at least 67% of the posts in the rank of Additional Director General, and 100% posts in the rank of Special Director General and Director General shall be filled by Indian Police Service (IPS) officers on deputation. The Bill has been criticised by Opposition members and retired CAPF officials.

Why was the Bill introduced?

The Bill is in response to a Supreme Court judgment dated May 23, 2025. A Bench of Justices A.S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan ruled then that the deputation posts of IPS officers in the Senior Administrative Grade or up to the rank of Inspector General in CAPFs should be "progressively reduced over a period of time, say within an outer limit of two years."

The Court also ruled that Group A officers of CAPFs are "Organised Services" for "all purposes." An Organised Group A Service (OGAS) is a structured, cadre-based civil service with defined hierarchy, promotion pathways, and cadre control, as distinct from isolated or general civil posts. The IPS, the Indian Administrative Service, and the Indian Foreign Service are all OGAS.

> Retired CAPF officials say an officer who joins at the rank of Assistant Commandant can go 16 years without a promotion, whereas IPS counterparts get 3-4 promotions

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) filed a review petition in the Supreme Court, which the Court dismissed on October 28, 2025. Despite the judgment, the MHA continued to appoint IPS officers in CAPFs at the rank of Inspector General and Deputy Inspector General. This prompted retired CAPF officials to file a contempt petition against Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan for not implementing the order. On March 9, the MHA informed the Court that a statutory intervention is proposed. And on March 10, the Union Cabinet gave its nod to the CAPF (General Administration) Bill, 2026.

What are the CAPFs?

The CAPFs comprise the Border Security Force (BSF), which is deployed along the Pakistan and Bangladesh borders; the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), which protects airports and critical installations; the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), which is deployed for internal security, law-and-order duties, and in Left Wing Extremism-affected areas; the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), which guards the border along Nepal and Bhutan; and the Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), which is deployed along the border with China.

At present, 20% of the posts in the rank of Deputy Inspector General and 50% of the posts in the rank of Inspector General in CAPFs are reserved for IPS officers through an executive order. There are around 13,000 Group A officers in the CAPFs, and about 10 lakh personnel in total. The MHA is the cadre-controlling authority of the CAPFs and the IPS. Recruitments are done by the Union Public Service Commission.

As on March 9, there were 213 sanctioned IPS posts in the CAPFs, of which 35 are vacant. There are 4,594 total IPS officers in the country and as per norms, 40% senior duty posts are to be reserved for Central deputation and the remaining 60% for the States.

Why is there opposition to the Bill?

Retired CAPF officials say the Bill is being brought to negate the Court's ruling. They argue that an officer who joins at the rank of an Assistant Commandant in the CRPF does not get a promotion even after 16 years of service, whereas their counterparts in the IPS get three or four promotions during the same period. They argue that the Bill reserves 100% of Special Director General posts for IPS officers replacing the present structure under which some CAPF officers could reach these positions.

What is the government's argument?

The Bill states that the CAPFs perform national security functions in close coordination with State authorities, and that IPS officers are necessary for their effective functioning in the interest of maintaining Centre-State relations.

What did Opposition members say?

Congress MP Ajay Maken said that the Bill encroaches upon the rights of the judiciary. He said the CAPFs have played an important role in combating Maoists, but they were not being promoted and that cases of suicide and voluntary retirement are increasing among the officers. CPI(M) MP John Brittas said Parliament cannot annul operative judicial orders without addressing their legal basis. Earlier, the Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge, wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to implement the Court order. Discussion on the Bill will resume on Monday.

What did the Court rule on SCs and religion?

What did the Supreme Court say about Scheduled Caste status for those not belonging to Hinduism, Sikhism, or Buddhism? Can SC status be restored through reconversion? What is the Centre's position on SC status for Dalit Muslims and Christians? What about Scheduled Tribes?

Abhinay Lakshman

The story so far:

The Supreme Court ruled on March 24 in *Chinthada Anand v. State of Andhra Pradesh* that a pastor from the Madiga community in Andhra Pradesh could not claim to be a member of a Scheduled Caste (SC) as he had converted to Christianity. The Court upheld the the decision of the Andhra Pradesh High Court, which had reached the same conclusion in an alleged atrocity matter.

Can a person of Christian faith be SC?

A Bench of Justices Prashant Kumar Mishra and Manmohan laid down that the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950, clearly defines the parameters under which SCs are to be identified. A clause in it says, "No person who professes a religion different from the Hindu, the Sikh or the Buddhist religion shall be deemed to be a member of a Scheduled Caste."

The judgement holds that this bar on religion imposed by the Constitution (SC) Order was "absolute" without exceptions. The Court has said that the term "profess" in the clause in the Order "connotes to publicly declare or practice a religion." In its March 24 ruling, the Court said that the appellant "professes Christianity" – a religion not mentioned in the Order.

"Conversion to any religion not specified in Clause 3 results in immediate and complete loss of Scheduled Caste status from the moment of conversion regardless of birth," the Court said. It added, "Christianity, by its very theological foundation, does not recognise or incorporate the institution of caste." The Court held that the moment one ceases to be a member of a SC by virtue of converting faith, "the loss of such status carries with it the automatic...termination of all eligibility for statutory benefits, protections, reservations, preferences and entitlements that are predicated upon or flow from such membership", including those under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.

> The Court said SC status ends immediately if one converts to a religion not listed in the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950

The Supreme Court of India. S. SUBRAMANIUM

Even though Chinthada Anand argued that he had a caste certificate showing that he belonged to the Madiga community, designated an SC community, the Court said, "Mere production of a certificate cannot override the admitted fact that the appellant is a practising Christian". It also said that there was no evidence to suggest that Mr. Anand had reconverted to Hinduism or that the community had accepted him back.

Is this question new? What is the Centre's position on this?

The Court has addressed the question of SC status for people from Dalit communities who have converted to Islam or Christianity. A petition to accord SC status for Dalit Christians and Muslims was filed in 2004 and continues to be heard today.

Over the years, petitioners have argued that several communities had historically belonged to SC groups but had, over time, converted to faiths such as Christianity and Islam. Even though their choice of faith may have been led by the wish to be freed of their caste, caste had entered their chosen faiths as well. They have cited reports commissioned by the government from the first decade of the 21st century supporting their position that Dalit Muslims and Christians should be accorded SC status.

The Union government has relied on the Constitution (SC) Order, 1950, and argued that Dalit Muslims and Christians should continue to be excluded because of the "foreign origin" of these faiths as opposed to Hinduism, Sikhism, and Buddhism.

The petitioners argued that the Constitution (SC) Order, 1950, had been amended first to include Sikhism in the 1950s and then Buddhism in 1990, in response to a large number of people in parts of the country turning to Buddhism, heeding Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's call.

In October 2022, the Centre constituted a Commission of Inquiry headed by former Chief Justice of India K.G. Balakrishnan to examine the issue of whether SC status can be accorded to SC converts to Islam and Christianity. The Commission's deadline is set for April this year.

What about people who have "reconverted" to Hinduism, Sikhism, or Buddhism?

Even as the the Centre's Commission of Inquiry is yet to submit its report, pending which the Supreme Court Bench hearing these matters will proceed, the Bench of Justices Mishra and Manmohan, on March 24, laid down the threshold for what counts as "reconversion", what is the burden of proof for this, and who this burden must fall upon.

The Court noted that if a person of SC origin claimed that they had "reconverted" to any of the faiths mentioned in the Constitution (SC) Order, 1950, three specific conditions must be met "cumulatively and conclusively". First, the person must be able to prove that they "originally belonged" to a SC group. Second, there must be "credible and unimpeachable evidence of bona fide reconversion to the original religion". Third, there must be evidence of "acceptance and assimilation by members of the original caste and concerned community." The Court said that the "burden of proving reconversion lies entirely on the claimant, to be proven through unimpeachable evidence."

In elaborating on the proof of "reconversion", the Supreme Court said that this should be accompanied by "complete and unequivocal renunciation of the religion to which conversion had taken place, total dissociation therefrom, and actual adoption and observance of the customs, usages, practices, rituals, and religious obligations of the original caste."

What about Scheduled Tribes (STs)?

The Court said that for STs, there was no such religion-based exclusion prescribed in the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950. "The determination of Scheduled Tribe status, therefore, cannot rest on conversion alone, but must turn on whether the claimant continues to possess and is recognised for the essential attributes of tribal identity, including customary practices, social organisation, community life, and acceptance by the concerned tribal community," the Court held.

The Court said that if a person's conversion or later actions completely break their connection with the tribal way of life and they lose recognition within the community, their ST status is weakened. Conversely, if the tribal attributes remain or are re-established and accepted by the community, the claim cannot be automatically rejected. Such cases must be evaluated on a fact-specific basis by the competent authority in accordance with constitutional principles.

Hundreds of ST communities profess Christianity, Islam, and indigenous faiths, such as Sarnaism. And while there are States such as Nagaland, where entire ST communities may have, over time, converted to Islam or Christianity, there are also States such as Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand, where there has been a rise in Adivasi movements insisting that ST communities that had converted to faiths other than indigenous ones be disentitled from getting statutory benefits meant for STs.

How will the new NDC accelerate climate action?

What is India's new Nationally Determined Contribution and how does it compare with previous commitments? What do emissions data indicate about progress towards these targets? Which sectors are driving trends? What are the contradictions in the country's climate action strategy?

Jacob Koshy

The story so far:

On Wednesday, the Union Cabinet approved India's updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). This includes committing to have 60% of its installed electric capacity from non-fossil sources by 2035, reducing by 47% the intensity of emissions per unit of GDP (from 2005 levels), and increasing its carbon sink to 3.5 billion-4 billion tonnes of CO_2 equivalent. These targets will be communicated to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. They arrive at a moment when a new analysis shows that India's CO_2 emissions in 2025 grew at the slowest rate in more than two decades.

Are NDCs voluntary or mandatory?

Under the Paris Agreement, every signatory country must periodically submit NDCs, which are voluntary pledges spelling out how they will transition away from fossil fuels. India's previous NDC, conveyed in August 2022, committed it to 50% non-fossil installed capacity by 2030, a 45% reduction in emissions intensity, and a carbon sink of at least 2.5 billion-3 billion tonnes of CO_2-equivalent.

The new targets raise each threshold. The 60% non-fossil capacity target is notable because India has already proven it can get there: as of early 2026, about 52% of installed capacity comes from non-fossil sources, a target met well ahead of the 2030 deadline. India and Argentina were the only G20 nations that had not announced a 2035 NDC by the end of 2025, so this announcement closes a conspicuous gap in the global ledger of climate pledges.

> The NDC process has been better at documenting ongoing progress than at driving the structural changes needed to phase out fossil fuels

Solar panels installed at the Vidhan Soudha in Bengaluru. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Have NDCs actually prodded countries towards clean energy?

This is the central question that hangs over every NDC cycle, and the evidence is decidedly mixed. The United Nations Environment Programme Emissions Gap Report 2025, titled 'Off Target', delivered a blunt verdict: nations have had three attempts to hit the mark with their NDCs since 2015, and each time they have landed off target. Projected warming fell from 2.6-2.8°C to 2.3-2.5°C, but methodological updates accounted for much of the improvement, and the U.S.'s withdrawal from the Paris Agreement cancels out another chunk. NDCs submitted so far close less than 14% of the emissions gap needed to reach 1.5°C, according to the World Resources Institute.

The details are more damning. E3G's NDC Energy Commitments Tracker, which assessed 101 submissions by late 2025, found that while 94% of countries included some commitment to at least one energy transition goal, not one presented a comprehensive plan aligned with the COP28 energy package. This was an agreement, called the 'UAE Consensus', by nearly 200 countries in December 2023 to accelerate climate action by transitioning away from fossil fuels, tripling global renewable energy capacity, and doubling energy efficiency improvements by 2030 to limit warming to 1.5°C. However, no country set a target for winding down oil and gas production. Nearly three-quarters did not mention fossil fuel subsidy reform. And most developing country NDCs depend on international finance, which is woefully short of the required scale.

The paradox, then, is this: the clean energy transition is accelerating anyway. Global solar and wind installations reached a record 814 GW in 2025. Renewables surpassed coal as the largest source of electricity globally in the first half of 2025. But this boom has been driven primarily by plummeting costs and industrial competition – particularly China's dominance in manufacturing – rather than by NDC-driven policy mandates. The NDC process, in other words, has been better at documenting ongoing progress than at driving the structural changes needed to phase out fossil fuels.

What does India's emissions data tell us?

A new analysis by the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA), published by Carbon Brief, finds that India's CO_2 emissions grew by just 0.7% in 2025, the slowest rate since 2001 excluding the Covid year of 2020. This is a dramatic deceleration from 4-11% growth in 2021-24. The power sector was the key driver: emissions fell 3.8%, after coal-fired generation declined for the first time outside of Covid since 1973. CREA underlines that India added 47 GW of solar, 6.3 GW of wind, 4 GW of hydro, and 0.6 GW of nuclear in 2025 or enough new clean generation to cover demand growth of up to 5%.

Not all sectors followed suit. Steel surged 8% and cement 10%, driving the small overall increase. The analysis suggests India's power sector could reach an inflection point as early as 2026, where newly added clean generation matches annual demand growth. The Central Electricity Authority's National Generation Adequacy Plan projects non-fossil sources reaching 786 GW – 70% of the total – by 2035-36, with solar alone crossing 500 GW. Sceptics note that 2025 had mild summers, minimal heatwaves, and weak industrial growth. This means this may be an aberration and a trend requires a few years to confirm.

What should we watch for?

India's NDC uses emissions intensity – emissions per unit of GDP – as its yardstick. Absolute emissions can continue rising as long as the economy outpaces them. India has defended this on grounds of equity, and as a legitimate framework for a country whose per-capita emissions remain a fraction of those in the West.

But contradictions persist. India plans 100 GW of new coal-fired capacity over seven years, $1 trillion in petrochemical investment by 2040, and a 50% increase in coal-based steel capacity by 2031. Over 37 GW of renewable capacity remains stranded due to gaps in grid readiness, as Vibhuti Garg of the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis has pointed out. Carbon sinks, one of the least discussed aspects of NDCs, require maintaining forest cover. India is far from its 33% target, currently at about 24%, including trees outside forests that critics argue may be unreliable as carbon sinks.

PROFILES

Europe's only anti-war Prime Minister

Pedro Sanchez

The Spanish leader, who describes Israel's atrocities in Gaza as genocide, has characterised the U.S.-Israel war on Iran as a violation of international law, becoming the only European head of government to publicly reject the war on principle

G. Sampath

On March 4, Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez delivered a televised address to the nation on "recent international events". Days earlier, when his government had announced it will not allow the U.S. to use their military bases in Spain for strikes on Iran, President Donald Trump had reacted angrily, saying, "We're going to cut off all trade with Spain."

As the conservative Opposition leaders accused Mr. Sanchez, leader of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE), of jeopardising Spain's relations with the U.S. for petty political gains, he doubled down. In a 10-minute speech that resonated across Europe, Mr. Sanchez characterised the war on Iran as a violation of international law, becoming the only European head of government to publicly reject the war on principle.

Mr. Sanchez, 54, elaborated on his anti-war stance in the form of three 'no's. "First, no to the breakdown of international law that protects us all, especially the most vulnerable, civilian population; second, no to assuming that the world can only solve its problems through conflict, through bombs; and finally, no to repeating the mistakes of the past" – a call back to the 2003 Iraq war which had been extremely unpopular in Spain. His government's position, he said, can be summed up in four words: 'No a la guerra', or 'no to war'. 'No a la guerra' quickly became a 'war cry' for thousands of anti-war protesters, adorning placards and banners as they organised demonstrations and marches across Spain.

It was clear from the beginning that the U.S./Israel-initiated war on Iran had no upside for Europe. It promised only energy shocks and economic setbacks. But Europe's political establishment, committed to a strategy of placating and flattering Mr. Trump, would not take him on. And then, Mr. Sanchez did.

Many have questioned the motives behind Mr. Sanchez's adversarial position, which he has justified on ethical grounds. They have suggested it is rather driven by self-serving pragmatism. After all, he is on his third term as Prime Minister. He runs a fragile coalition government with the support of smaller left-wing parties and regional allies, including Catalan separatists. He has been losing regional elections. He has not got a budget passed in years. And elections are due in 2027. With barely a year left in his premiership, what better way to shore up his support base, please his allies, and put the pro-war Opposition on the mat than to take on the cartoonishly villainous persona of Trump? It would also distract the public from the corruption allegations against his wife – allegations he claims were cooked up by right-wing operatives to harass him.

There may be merit in this argument. As the first politician in Spain's history to oust a sitting Prime Minister through a no-confidence motion, there is no doubt Mr. Sanchez is a savvy political operator. Yet, if it was such an easy political win to increase your popularity by confronting Mr. Trump, why have not his European counterparts done it? Contrast Sanchez's words – "We will not be complicit in something that is bad for the world and that is also contrary to our values and interests, simply out of fear of reprisals from someone" – with those spoken by the head of Europe's most powerful economy, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, who said, "Categorising the events [in Iran] under international law will have relatively little effect. Therefore, this is not the time to lecture our partners and allies."

ILLUSTRATION: R. RAJESH

Standing up to Trump and Israel

Pragmatism is a part of the explanation, not all of it. Mr. Sanchez had defied Mr. Trump before as well, when he rejected his diktat that European NATO members should raise their military spending to 5% of national GDP. He secured an exemption for Spain, stating it would spend only 2.1%. He is also the only European head of government to describe Israeli atrocities in Gaza as "genocide". He has barred Spanish ports and air space from being used for ferrying weapons to the Israeli war machine. He rejected Mr. Trump's Gaza reconstruction plans on the grounds that it lacked Palestinian input. Unlike a few other European states that mildly pushed back against Mr. Trump's claims on Greenland but endorsed his actions against Venezuela, Mr. Sanchez's foreign policy positions – be it Greenland, Venezuela, Gaza, Lebanon or Cuba – have been consistent with the principle that international law must be the basis for conflict resolution.

Mr. Sanchez's most startling departure from the rest of Europe, and also the West as whole, is his policy on immigration. While every other social democrat leader in Europe feels compelled to assuage anti-immigrant sentiment by raising barriers to illegal immigration, Mr. Sanchez has been aggressively pro-immigrant. In January, his government rolled out a programme to "regularise" half a million undocumented immigrants by giving them work and residency permits. He explained his rationale in an op-ed in the *New York Times*, titled, "I'm the Prime Minister of Spain. This is why the West Needs Migrants". In an obvious reference to Mr. Trump, he wrote: "Some leaders have chosen to hunt them down and deport them through operations that are both unlawful and cruel. My government has chosen a different way: a fast and simple path to regularise their immigration status." He explained the economic benefits of being an "open" rather than closed society, pointing out that mitigating labour shortages through migrants have enabled Spain to become the fastest growing large economy of Europe, increase workers' purchasing power, and lower poverty and inequality levels.

Good politics

Mr. Sanchez's positions could be understood through a moral or ideological lens. But they are more usefully read as "good politics', defined not in the narrow sense of prolonging your hold on power but broadly understood as delivering on the promises that made people vote you to power. What sets him apart from other European social democrats is that he believes in stubbornly embracing social democratic policies instead of junking or diluting them once in power.

Born in 1972 in Madrid to a civil servant couple, Mr. Sanchez joined the PSOE in 1993, picking up a doctorate in economics along the way as he swiftly climbed the party ranks, becoming the secretary-general in 2014. He led the party to two back-to-back defeats before finally becoming Prime Minister in 2018, a post he has held since.

In rejecting Mr. Trump's war-related demands, Mr. Sanchez likely calculated there was little risk of economic blowback against Spain since it traded with the U.S. as part of the EU bloc. Regardless of his political motivations, Mr. Sanchez has not only shown up the hypocrisy of other Western leaders but also demonstrated that it is both possible and politically rewarding to stand up to the bully and walk the talk on 'European' values.

THE GIST

- Pedro Sanchez has elaborated on his anti-war stance in the form of three 'no's. First, no to the breakdown of international law that protects all
- Second, no to assuming that the world can solve its problems only through conflict and bombs
- Finally, no to repeating the mistakes of the past — a call back to the 2003 Iraq war which had been extremely unpopular in Spain

Ascent of the Guardsman

Mohammad Bagher Zolqadr

The rise of the former IRGC commander as the Secretary of Iran's National Security Council suggests the Guards are tightening their grip on Iran's state machinery

Stanly Johny

When Hamas launched its cross-border attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, killing at least 1,200 people, Mohammad Bagher Zolqadr, then Secretary of Iran's Expediency Council, called it a "turning point" for Palestinians. "This operation is the starting point of the fall of the Zionist regime," he said. The chain of events triggered by the attack has now led to a full-blown Israeli-American war on Iran. The conflict has brought the 72-year-old former commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) to the centre of Iran's security decision-making.

After the U.S. and Israel launched the war on February 28, by killing Ali Khamenei, Iran's Supreme Leader, and several other leaders, Ali Larijani, Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, emerged as the face of the Iranian state and defiance. Larijani was already one of the most powerful men in the Islamic Republic. On March 17, Larijani was assassinated by an Israeli air strike. Seven days later, President Masoud Pezeshkian appointed Mr. Zolqadr as Larijani's successor. As Secretary of the Security Council, he is expected to play a significant role in key security decision-making at a time when the state is fighting a war of survival.

ILLUSTRATION: SREEJITH R. KUMAR

Mr. Zolqadr belongs to a generation of Guardsmen associated with the 'Mansouroun' network, an Islamist militant organisation which contributed influential figures to the IRGC such as Mohsen Rezaei, Ali Shamkhani and Gholam Ali Rashid.

After the 1979 revolution which overthrew the Shah's monarchy, Mr. Zolqadr joined one of the revolutionary committees. After Saddam Hussein's Iraq, backed by Persian Gulf monarchies, invaded Iran in 1980, Mr. Zolqadr, like many of his comrades in Mansouroun, joined the Ramadan Headquarters, which was in charge of the IRGC's external operations, particularly coordinating with Iraqi Kurdish and Shia groups that were opposed to Saddam's rule.

The Ramadan Headquarters later became the Quds Force, the external arm of the Guards.

By the time the war ended in 1988, the IRGC had emerged as one of the most powerful institutions of the Islamic Republic. When Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani became President (1989-1997), Mr. Zolqadr headed the IRGC Joint Staff. Rafsanjani was followed by Mohammad Khatami, a reformist President. Mr. Zolqadr was among the IRGC commanders who wrote a letter to Mr. Khatami, asking him to take action against student-led protests in the late 1990s.

The General's threat

In the 2005 Presidential election, Mr. Zolqadr aligned with Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. "We carried out a multilayered plan to help Ahmadinejad win," Mr. Zolqadr later said. Mr. Ahmadinejad appointed Mr. Zolqadr, who was the Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the IRGC, as a Deputy Interior Minister. He then warned that if the U.S. were to attack Iran, Tehran would "fire tens of thousands of missiles at American targets every day and threaten Israel as America's backstop".

In 2010, Mr. Zolqadr was appointed as a senior aide to Iran's judiciary chief Sadegh Larijani, the brother of Ali Larijani. Since September 2022, he had been serving as the Secretary of the Expediency Council, an administrative assembly appointed by the Supreme Leader. While its constitutional responsibility is to resolve any differences between the Majles and the Guardian Council, which has a veto over bills passed by the Assembly, the Expediency Council also acts as an advisory body to the Supreme Leader.

In March 2024, Mr. Zolqadr had said that the Guards should exert greater control over the country. In Iran's complex power structure, the military establishment, the clerical leadership and elected politicians all wield influence. While the IRGC has long been the backbone of Iran's armed forces, other branches of the state have also played key roles in running the country.

The war, however, appears to have shifted the balance further towards the Guards, who report directly to the Supreme Leader. Larijani was a politician with links to the IRGC, but Mr. Zolqadr is a Guardsman with political reach. With his ascent to the post of the Secretary of the Security Council, the IRGC has further tightened its grip on Iran's state machinery.

The rebel within

Joe Kent

The former soldier who has resigned as the National Counterterrorism chief over the war on Iran says Israel and its powerful lobby led the U.S. into the conflict

Smriti Sudesh

"Iran posed no imminent threat to our nation, and it is clear that we started this war due to pressure from Israel and its powerful American lobby." With those words, posted on X on March 17, Joe Kent became the highest-ranking official to resign from U.S. President Donald Trump's administration over the U.S.-Israel war on Iran. Mr. Trump immediately dismissed him as "weak on security" and called his departure "a good thing".

Mr. Kent's exit as Mr. Trump's National Counterterrorism chief has spotlighted simmering tensions inside the MAGA coalition as the conflict, now in its fourth week, tests interpretations of 'America First'.

The tension surfaced early. When the U.S. and Israel launched strikes on Iran on February 28, the response from Mr. Trump's most loyal media ecosystem was not uniform. Tucker Carlson, who had personally lobbied Mr. Trump against attacking Iran, went public with his opposition, questioning whether the campaign served American interests or risked repeating the long wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Marjorie Taylor Greene, a Republican Congresswoman who recently resigned, was blunt, too. "We voted for America First and ZERO wars," she said. Publicly, support remains strong. Polls show 77-90% of Republican and self-identified MAGA voters back the Iran action. But some of the movement's most visible voices, including Mr. Kent, have begun to ask whether this war was ever part of the deal.

ILLUSTRATION: SREEJITH R. KUMAR

War veteran

Born on April 11, 1980, in a cabin in Sweet Home, Oregon, Kent enlisted in the Army at 17. He earned his Green Beret as a Special Forces weapons sergeant, rose to the post of chief warrant officer, and was selected into an elite Special Missions Unit. Over two decades, he operated across Iraq, Yemen, and other high-threat environments, earning multiple Bronze Stars. After retiring, he joined the CIA's Special Activities Center as a paramilitary officer.

In 2019, his wife Shannon, a Navy cryptologic technician supporting special operations, was killed in a suicide bombing in Syria. Left to raise their two sons, Colt and Josh, Mr. Kent turned personal loss into public engagement, speaking about veterans, counterterrorism, and the human cost of prolonged conflicts. His Instagram bio reads: "Father of 2 amazing boys & husband". He ran twice for Congress in Washington's 3rd District as a Trump-endorsed, anti-establishment conservative. In 2025, Mr. Trump nominated him to lead the National Counterterrorism Center, where he reported to Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard.

A man who spent two decades in America's elite fighting forces and was privy to the country's most sensitive intelligence briefings, Mr. Kent has triggered ripples in the MAGA base with his opposition to the war and criticism of Israel's influence. In 2024, Kent co-authored the book *Send Me: The True Story of a Mother at War* with Marty Skovlund Jr., detailing his wife's high-risk deployments and the challenges of balancing elite service with raising their two sons.

In his letter, Mr. Kent accused Israeli officials and American media of running a "misinformation campaign" to push the President away from restraint, calling it "the same tactic the Israelis used to draw us into the disastrous Iraq war". The FBI has opened an investigation into alleged leaks of classified information that began months before Mr. Kent's resignation. His defenders call it political retaliation.

The anti-war sentiment inside MAGA is real, but it is not a majority. For many Trump voters, Iran is a designated state sponsor of terrorism with a long record of attacking U.S. forces through proxies. Loyalty to Mr. Trump remains the movement's most powerful adhesive.

But the fault line is structural. It runs through two competing ideas of what 'America First' actually means – one rooted in restraint, where ending forever wars is the point, and another that sees projecting strength abroad as central to American power. For years, both strands coexisted within the MAGA coalition, largely untested. The Iran campaign has begun to force that distinction into the open.

With midterm polls months away, the political arithmetic is delicate. A prolonged conflict, spiking oil prices, rising living costs and any rise in U.S. casualties could further strain the MAGA coalition.

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan to host Saudi, Turkiye, Egypt for talks on West Asia war

AFP

Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said he had a "detailed" call with Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian on Saturday, as Ministers from Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Turkiye prepared to meet in Islamabad for talks on the war. "I reiterated Pakistan's strong condemnation of the Israeli attacks on Iran," he wrote on X. AFP

KYIV

Russian drones kill five in Ukraine and damage maternity hospital

REUTERS

Russia launched 273 drones in waves of attacks on Ukraine, killing five people and damaging gas production facilities, port infrastructure, residential buildings and a maternity hospital, Ukrainian officials said on Saturday. The Ukrainian Air Force said the southern Odesa region was the focus of the attacks. REUTERS

JERUSALEM

Media association slams Israeli soldiers' 'assault' on *CNN* crew

AFP

The Foreign Press Association on Saturday condemned what it described as a "violent assault" by Israeli soldiers who detained a *CNN* crew in the occupied West Bank this week. A *CNN* team was reporting on the aftermath of an assault by Israeli settlers near Tayasir on Thursday when it was detained by Israeli soldiers. AFP

KUWAIT

Kuwait airport hit by drones, radar system damaged, but no casualties

AP

Kuwait International Airport was targeted by multiple drone attacks on Saturday that caused significant damage to its radar system but resulted in no casualties, state news agency *KUNA* reported. The Civil Aviation Authority's spokesperson said the attacks were carried out by Iran, its proxies and the armed factions it supports. REUTERS

15 U.S. troops wounded in Iranian strike on Saudi base in past week

Iran launched six ballistic missiles and 29 drones, seriously injuring at least five U.S. troops; attacks follow Trump's claim that war-ending talks were going 'very well'; Iran's military claims it destroyed a Ukrainian anti-drone system depot in Dubai

Associated Press
DUBAI

More than two dozen U.S. troops have been wounded in Iranian attacks on Saudi Arabia's Prince Sultan Air Base in the past week, according to two people who have been briefed on the matter.

Iran fired six ballistic missiles and 29 drones at the base on Friday, injuring at least 15 troops, including five seriously, according to the sources who were not authorised to comment publicly.

The soldiers were inside a building at the base when it was struck, the *Wall Street Journal* reported.

Critical strike: A satellite image shows planes at Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia. REUTERS

Several aerial refuelling planes also suffered damage in the attack, the reports said.

The base, about 96 km from the Saudi capital of Riyadh, came under attack twice earlier in the week, including a strike that wounded 14 U.S. troops, according to the people briefed on the matter.

The base is run by the Royal Saudi Air Force but is also used by U.S. troops.

The latest attacks happened after U.S. President Donald Trump claimed that talks on ending the war were going "very well". He said he had given Tehran until April 6 to reopen the Strait of Hormuz. Iran says it has not engaged in any negotiations.

Elsewhere, Iran's military said on Saturday it had targeted a Ukrainian anti-drone system depot in the United Arab Emirates which it said was used to assist U.S. forces.

"As the hideouts of American commanders and soldiers in Dubai were targeted... a Ukrainian anti-drone system depot that was located in Dubai to assist the U.S. military ... was targeted and destroyed," Iran's military central operational command Khatam Al-Anbiya said in a statement carried by state TV.

Earlier on Saturday, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on an unannounced visit to the UAE that the two countries had agreed to cooperate on defence.

Meanwhile, Iran's Revolutionary Guards said on they had found and dismantled more than 120 unexploded cluster bombs, alleging they were dropped during U.S. and Israeli attacks on a southern province.

(With AFP inputs)

Israeli strike kills three journalists in southern Lebanon

Agence France-Presse
BEIRUT

An Israeli strike killed three journalists on Saturday in south Lebanon, their channels and a Lebanese military source said, while Israel said one of them was a Hezbollah member. This came as Israel continued its raids on southern Lebanon, and Hezbollah announced it had targeted Israeli forces that had entered border villages.

A Lebanese military source said earlier on Saturday that Ali Shoeib of Hezbollah's *Al Manar* channel and Fatima Ftouni of *Al Mayadeen*, seen as close to the Iran-backed movement, were killed in Jezzine, alongside Ftouni's brother, a cameraman.

Al Mayadeen and *Al Manar* confirmed the deaths of their journalists.

Long track record

Shoeib was one of *Al Manar's* most prominent war correspondents, having covered Israeli attacks on Lebanon for decades.

In a statement, the Israeli military said it had targeted Shoeib, accusing him of being a "terrorist in the intelligence unit of Hezbollah's Radwan Force".

Shoeib, it said, "operated within the Hezbollah terrorist organisation under the guise of a journalist for the *Al Manar* network, while operating systematically to expose the locations of IDF soldiers operating in southern Lebanon and along the border".

Israel attacks towns and villages across southern Lebanon

An Israeli self-propelled howitzer artillery gun fires rounds towards southern Lebanon from upper Galilee in northern Israel. AFP

Agence France-Presse
BEIRUT

Israel carried out dawn air strikes on several towns in southern Lebanon on Saturday, Lebanese state media reported, as Israel and Hezbollah said they continued to target each other's forces.

Lebanon's state-run *National News Agency* reported "a series of strikes" at dawn on the town of Majdal Selm and "successive strikes" on the towns of Kafra, Hanniyeh, Touline and Adloun.

It added that several Israeli strikes also targeted the city of Nabatiyeh, hitting "residential and commercial buildings and a fuel station". At the same time, the agency reported strikes on border towns, particularly Taybeh, along with "an attempt by enemy forces to advance toward the Litani area".

It also reported having hit dozens of Hezbollah sites overnight and said it killed two senior members of Hezbollah's communications unit in a strike on Beirut on Friday.

For its part, Hezbollah said in a series of statements that it had targeted gatherings of Israeli forces in Debel, a predominantly Christian border town with some remaining residents despite the war.

The group said it struck a Merkava tank "with an attack drone" in Debel.

Hezbollah also announced it targeted the Israeli military's Northern Command headquarters, north of the city of Safed in northern Israel, with a volley of rockets.

Lebanese Health Minister Rakan Nassereddine said that 46 rescuers and five medical staff had been killed by Israel since the start of the war on March 2.

Trump declares 'Cuba is next', denies losing MAGA support

Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Friday "Cuba is next" in his latest threat against the Caribbean island, as he dismissed concerns that recent American military actions would cost him political support.

Cuba's communist government has faced mounting pressure from Mr. Trump, who imposed a de facto oil blockade in January and mused about "taking" the country.

Donald Trump

Speaking at the Saudi-backed FII Priority investment forum in Miami, Mr. Trump said his Make America Great Again (MAGA) movement wanted "strength" and "victory," citing the January raid where U.S. forces seized Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro. "I built this great military. I said, "You'll never have to use it," but sometimes you have to use it," Mr. Trump said.

"And Cuba is next, by the way. But pretend I didn't say that."

Mr. Trump did not specify what he planned to do with Cuba, telling the media to "disregard that statement" before repeating "Cuba's next" to laughter from the audience.

Cuba's leader Miguel Diaz-Canel said last week that any external aggressor would face "unbreakable resistance," even as the country was hit with two nationwide blackouts.

Yemen's Houthis launch missile attack, says Israel's military

Agence France-Presse
JERUSALEM

Israel's military reported a first missile launch from Yemen since the West Asia war began on February 28, after Iran's Houthi allies threatened to join the fighting.

A military statement said Israeli forces had "identified the launch of a missile from Yemen toward Israeli territory, aerial defence systems are operating to intercept the threat".

It was the first such statement mentioning a launch from Yemen during the war with Iran, which has entered its second month. There were no reports of any casualties or damage in Israel, and media reports suggested the missile may have been intercepted.

Yemen's Houthi movement warned on Friday it would join the war if U.S.-Israeli attacks continue to hit its ally Iran or if more countries join the conflict.

The Houthi have in the past attacked shipping in the Red Sea.

Former Nepal PM Oli and ex-Home Minister Lekhak arrested over Gen Z protest killings

Sanjeev Satgainya
KATHMANDU

A new government installed in Nepal after earlier this month's seismic electoral shift has stoked political tensions with the arrest of former Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli.

The police on Saturday arrested Mr. Oli and former Home Minister Ramesh Lekhak on charges of culpable homicide during last September's Gen Z protests.

The arrests came a day after the new government led by Balendra Shah of the Rastriya Swatantra Party was sworn in, six months after the protests in which 76 people lost their lives, including 19 in police firing on September 8.

According to police, the arrests were made to implement the recommendations of a probe commission that investigated the incidents during the Gen Z uprising.

Mr. Oli was taken into custody from his residence in Gundu, while Mr. Lekhak was arrested in Suryabinayak, Bhaktapur, a district adjoining Kathmandu.

The Gen Z protests overthrew the Oli government, in which Mr. Lekhak, a Nepali Congress leader, served as Home Minister.

A demonstrator attempts to hurl a flaming tyre during a protest following Oli's detention in Kathmandu on Saturday. REUTERS

Widespread protests

Tensions ran high in various parts of Kathmandu on Saturday as members of Mr. Oli's Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) took to the streets. Protesters demanding Mr. Oli's release clashed with police in Maitighar, the designated protest site in the capital. Police stepped up security in and around Singha Durbar, the government complex.

The commission formed to investigate the incidents of September 8 and 9 recommended that Mr. Oli and Mr. Lekhak be prosecuted for negligent killings, stating that they failed to prevent lethal police firing on the first day of the protests. The first Cabinet meeting of the new government, formed after the RSP's landslide victory in the March 5 elections, on Friday decided to implement the commission's report.

Home Minister Sudhan Gurung then moved quickly, holding a meeting with the chiefs of Nepal Police and the Armed Police Force late Friday night to implement the commission's recommendations.

On Saturday morning, after police arrested the two leaders, Mr. Gurung posted on Facebook: "Aayo Gorkhali," which translates to "Gorkhali has arrived" but carries the connotation of courage and bravery.

The move to arrest the two leaders, however, has raised questions, with critics saying it reeks of vendetta politics.

The commission also recommended prosecution of Chandra Kuber Khapung, who was chief of Nepal Police at the time of the protests, along with other high-ranking officials. However, they have not been arrested.

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS - TIRUPATI
I.T. DEPARTMENT **e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE**

Adv. No: 24/TTD-11021(91)/5/2025-IT-TTD 27-03-2026.

Online open tenders are invited on e-procurement platform for the works with the following NIT Nos: NIT No. 172 to 186 /EDPM/TTD/TPT/2025-26.

For tender notice visit **http://www.tirumala.org.** For participation in the e-tender log onto **https://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in** or log **https://www.apeprocurement.gov.in.**

TTD-40021/10/2025-PRO SEC(Adv.No.450) Date:28-03-2026 **EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

KARNATAKA STATE ROAD TRANSPORT CORPORATION
Central Offices, Stores and Purchase Dept, K.H. Road, Shanthinagar, Bengaluru-560 027

No.: KST/CO/S&P/1615/2025-26 Date:28.03.2026

NOTICE INVITING TENDER NO. 13, Dated:28/03/2026

Tenders (Pre-qualification and or commercial offers) through e-procurement portal http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in are invited for supply of the following Goods/Services/ Equipment:

Tender Nos as per E-portal	Nomenclature of Items/ Services/ Equipment	Tender Value in Crores Rs. (Approx)	Last date for submission of tender @ 17.00hrs
KSRTC/2025-26 IND0279	Procurement of RN & New Assemblies / Sub-assemblies required for VOLVO & Scania Vehicles.	4.90	30/04/2026
KSRTC/2025-26 IND0280	Procurement of Brake & Clutch Parts required for VOLVO & Scania Buses.	3.50	30/04/2026
KSRTC/2025-26 IND0281	Procurement of King Pin Components & Stub Axles.	3.50	30/04/2026
KSRTC/2025-26 IND0282	Procurement of Spare Parts required for maintenance of TATA and Leyland BSVI Vehicles.	4.00	30/04/2026
KSRTC/2025-26 IND0283	Procurement of Piston Assembly & Ring Sets.	3.00	30/04/2026
KSRTC/2025-26 IND0284	Procurement of Air Conditioner Spares required for Premium Bus A/c System.	2.20	30/04/2026
KSRTC/2025-26 IND0285	Procurement of Non Amino Based Engine Coolant.	3.21	30/04/2026
KSRTC/2025-26 IND0286	Procurement of Aluminum Pop Rivets	0.50	30/04/2026

Corrigendum: Tender No KSRTC/2025-26/IND0267, Procurement of Black Rexine for Ashwamedha Vehicle, to be read as Procurement of Vinyl Coated Fabric and Black Rexine for Ashwamedha Vehicle and the value is 8.0 crores.

NOTE:- Interested suppliers need to register in the e-procurement portal. For further information log into **http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** In case of further assistance, contact e-procurement cell (Phone. No. 080-46010000/080-68948777). Interested bidders may also contact e-procurement cell for training on bid submission. Mail to **support@eprochelpdesk.com** for further information if required. In case of bidders need assistance from KSRTC, can communicate at cosp@ksrtc.org, (contact: 7760990224)

Sd/-
CONTROLLER OF STORES & PURCHASES
(Tender Inviting Authority)

DIPR/CP/JA/6510/2025-26

MARK OF RESPECT

RCB and SRH players wear black armbands to honour victims

K. MURALI KUMAR

The RCB and SRH team members wore black armbands during their IPL opener at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium on Saturday to pay tribute to the 11 fans who lost their lives in the stampede outside the venue following the Bengaluru team's historic title win last year. Both teams also observed a minute's silence ahead of the game.

BACK WITH A BANG

Extra rest helps me freshen up mentally, says Kohli

K. MURALI KUMAR

With the kind of scheduling we have had over the last 15 years, there was always a risk of getting burnt out. So whenever I come back, I am able to give my 120%. In fact, the extra rest helps me freshen up mentally. And as long as I am physically fit and mentally excited, both come together nicely — Virat Kohli.

READY TO HELP

Watson excited about working with Green at Knight Riders

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

There are a number of exciting things about me coming to KKR. One of the biggest is working with Cameroon Green. I've had several conversations with him over the years, but being able to help him in his journey and support his growth is something I'm really excited about — Knight Riders assistant coach Shane Watson.

SUPPORT SYSTEM

Leadership experience in MI will help Hardik, reckons Jayawardene

EMMANUAL YOGINI

MI coach Mahela Jayawardene believes the wealth of leadership experience in the dressing room will be a significant advantage for captain Hardik Pandya. "It's great to have all this experience. We're proud of that as well because that's a core group that we built over many years. That's a benefit that we reap from that," he said.

Kohli, Padikkal make it a cakewalk for RCB

The opener guides the team home with an unbeaten 38-ball 69 while the No. 3 smashes 61 off just 26 deliveries; Duffy scalps three on his debut

IPL-19

Ashwin Achal
BENGALURU

High-octane cricket returned to the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium with a bang as Royal Challengers Bengaluru outclassed Sunrisers Hyderabad by six wickets in the IPL 2026 season opener here on Saturday.

It was a festive occasion at the iconic venue, which hosted its first top-level outing since the deadly stampede last year.

The packed house revelled on an entertaining night, one where RCB poster boy Virat Kohli (69 n.o., 38b, 5x4, 5x6), hometown hero Devdutt Padikkal (61, 26b, 7x4, 4x6) and captain Rajat Patidar (31, 12b, 2x4, 3x6) were in their element.

The trio's fireworks took RCB to the 202-run target with 4.2 overs to spare. Padikkal gave the home team a flying start, ensuring that Phil Salt's early dismissal made no dent.

Kohli was all class when a straight bat sent an overpitched delivery from pacer Eshan Malinga to the sight screen.

Later, the 37-year-old produced a stunning shot when he whipped a length ball from Harshal Patel deep into the square-leg stands.

Sparkling cameo

Patidar kept the tempo up with a brief, explosive knock. There was a stutter when Patidar and Jitesh Sharma fell off successive balls, but there was no stopping RCB.

The SRH bowlers were much too full on a surface with spongy bounce.

After being put in, Ishan Kishan (80, 38b, 8x4, 5x6) and Aniket Verma (43, 18b, 3x4, 4x6) landed the big blows to push SRH beyond 200.

Lead performers: Duffy set the ball rolling for RCB before Kohli and Padikkal stole the show. Kishan's knock went in vain. K. MURALI KUMAR

Kishan and Aniket were the only visiting batters who were able to connect sweetly.

RCB fast bowler Jacob Duffy, who made his IPL debut, read the conditions well, banging in the short balls to great effect.

The batters rushed into the shot and mistimed it, handing the Kiwi three crucial top-order wickets.

Stand-in skipper Kishan got going with a back-foot punch, and kept up the attacking instinct despite the loss of wickets.

Heinrich Klaasen (31, 22b, 2x4, 1x6) and Kishan put on a rollicking fourth-wicket alliance before Salt took a good catch at deep mid-wicket to cut short the South African batter's stay.

Salt was back in action a couple of overs later, pulling off a one-handed stunner to dismiss Kishan.

Aniket provided the spark at the end, only to be outshone by the RCB batters.

SCOREBOARD

SUNRISERS HYDERABAD
Travis Head c Salt b Duffy 11 *(9b, 2x4)*, Abhishek Sharma c Jitesh b Duffy 7 *(8b, 1x6)*, Ishan Kishan c Salt b Abhinandan 80 *(38b, 8x4, 5x6)*, Nitish Kumar c Abhinandan b Duffy 1 *(6b)*, Heinrich Klaasen c Salt b Shepherd 31 *(22b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Salil Arora c Padikkal **(Impact Player for Duffy)** b Suyash 9 *(6b, 1x6)*, Aniket Verma c Kohli b Shepherd 43 *(18b, 3x4, 4x6)*, Harsh Dubey c Padikkal b Shepherd 3 *(3b)*, Harshal Patel c Padikkal b Bhuvneshwar 0 *(2b)*, David Payne **(Impact Player for Head)** (not out) 6 *(5b)*, Jaydev Unadkat (not out) 4 *(3b)*; Extras (lb-2, w-4): 6; Total (for nine wkts. in 20 overs): 201.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-18 (Abhishek, 2.1 overs), 2-23 (Head, 2.6), 3-29 (Nitish, 4.2), 4-126 (Klaasen, 13.1) 5-137 (Salil, 14.3), 6-155 (Kishan, 15.6), 7-167 (Harsh, 16.6), 8-174 (Harshal, 17.5), 9-192 (Aniket, 18.6).

RCB BOWLING
Duffy 4-0-22-3, Bhuvneshwar 4-0-31-1, Abhinandan 3-0-38-1, Shepherd 4-0-54-3, Suyash 3-0-28-1, Krunal 2-0-26-0.

ROYAL CHALLENGERS
Phil Salt c Klaasen b Unadkat 8 *(7b, 2x4)*, Virat Kohli (not out) 69 *(38b, 5x4, 5x6)*, Devdutt Padikkal c Klaasen b Harsh 61 *(26b, 7x4, 4x6)*, Rajat Patidar c Harsh b Payne 31 *(12b, 2x4, 3x6)*, Jitesh Sharma c Unadkat b Payne 0 *(1b)*, Tim David (not out) 16 *(10b, 1x4, 1x6)*; Extras (b-8, lb-3, w-7): 18; Total (for four wkts. in 15.4 overs): 203.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-9 (Salt, 1.1), 2-110 (Padikkal, 8.4), 3-163 (Patidar, 12.2), 4-163 (Jitesh, 12.3).

SUNRISERS BOWLING
Nitish 2-0-19-0, Unadkat 3-0-29-1, Payne 3-0-35-2, Harsh 3-0-35-1, Malinga 2-0-35-0, Harshal 2.4-0-39-0.

Toss: RCB; **PoM:** Duffy.
RCB won by six wickets with 26 balls to spare.

Next assignment

RCB: April 5 vs. CSK Bengaluru, 7.30 p.m.

SRH: April 2 vs. KKR Kolkata, 7.30 p.m.

Dhoni to miss early games with calf strain

S. Prasanna Venkatesan
CHENNAI

M.S. Dhoni is likely to miss the first two weeks of IPL 2026 after suffering a calf strain, Chennai Super Kings confirmed on Saturday.

"M.S. Dhoni is currently undergoing rehabilitation for a calf strain. As a result, he is likely to miss the first two weeks of IPL 2026," the franchise said in a statement.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, CSK CEO K.S. Viswanathan said the injury occurred "during a practice match" at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium here. He added that Dhoni is undergoing rehabilitation "in Chennai" under the supervision of the CSK support staff and is expected to take around two weeks to recover.

The development comes days after Dhoni, at the CSK ROAR'26 event, acknowledged that his fitness was "on the way down" with age, when the prospect of playing beyond this season was put to him on stage.

The 44-year-old has managed his workload carefully in recent seasons. He underwent arthroscopic knee surgery in Mumbai following CSK's title-winning campaign in 2023, where he played through the tournament with a heavily strapped left knee. In IPL 2025, Dhoni featured in all 14 league matches and batted lower down the order.

On his last legs: It remains to be seen how far Dhoni can stretch his IPL career. R. RAGU

Slow starter MI takes on 'favourite' opponent KKR

Amol Karhadkar
MUMBAI

Mumbai Indians has traditionally been the bogey team for Kolkata Knight Riders, particularly at the Wankhede Stadium, where the home side enjoys a commanding 10-2 head-to-head record.

Yet, history offers a curious counterpoint – the last time MI won its season-opener was back in 2012. Such contrasting trends make it difficult to pick a clear favourite purely on numbers. But, if present circumstances are anything to go by, the scales tilt decisively in favour of the host ahead of Sunday night's Indian Premier League clash between the former champions.

And it is not just about MI's star-studded line-up or the familiarity of home conditions. The visitors arrive with concerns over their pace-bowling resources. Mustafizur Rahman's BCCI-enforced exit has already weakened the attack, and the subsequent season-ending injuries to Harshit Rana and Akash Deep have compounded the problem. With Matheesha Pathirana's availability still uncertain, KKR's death-bowling options are stretched. As a result, the Kolkata outfit will rely heavily on its trusted spin duo – Sunil Narine and Varun Chakaravarthy – to contain a formidable MI batting line-up.

Positive sign: Bumrah bowled on the eve of MI's opener, ending speculation over his availability. EMMANUAL YOGINI

Today's match

MUMBAI INDIANS vs KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS

Mumbai, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played: 35

MI 24 | KKR 11

PREVIOUS MEETING

MI won by eight wickets, 2025

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1, SS SELECT 1, 2 & JIOHOTSTAR

The five-time champion, meanwhile, finds itself in the enviable position of having plenty of options. With four members of India's recent triumphant T20 World Cup squad, along with another former World Cup-winning captain, the squad appears balanced and well-rounded.

The absence of Will Jacks and Mitchell Santner – both stars who set the World Cup on fire are yet to join the squad – is unlikely to worry the team management.

Afghanistan's mystery spinner Allah Ghazanfar, who missed last season due to injury, is fit and available, further strengthening MI's bowling reserves.

There were encouraging signs during training, too. Jasprit Bumrah bowled with a short run-up, ending speculation over his availability. And a leaner and fitter Rohit Sharma will be eager to come good against an opponent he has traditionally enjoyed facing.

Age catches up with even the evergreen

K.C. Vijaya Kumar

Athletes keep fighting against the fading light but eventually age catches up. One of Chennai's favourite sons and a legend in world cricket is grappling with this truth.

When Chennai Super Kings (CSK) put out a message on social media that its talisman M.S. Dhoni is likely to miss the first two weeks of Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 due to a calf strain, the old maxim time and tide wait for none, came to the fore again. Ruturaj Gaikwad may captain CSK but its spiritual leader has always been Dhoni.

Fans clad in yellow at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium may celebrate almost every player at Chepauk, but unabashed love is entirely reserved for the star from Ranchi. It is a tie that has been in vogue since the IPL's inception in 2008.

At 44, Dhoni has practised the art of the gradual fade-out. As the Indian skipper, he retired from Tests in 2014, his last hurray in the blue shade in limited overs cricket was in 2019. Even with CSK, he relinquished his captaincy stint, while still extending his alliance with the game.

One of the joys of an unrelenting Indian summer with its heat and mangoes is to see Dhoni seemingly hoodwink time. He keeps with alacrity and wades into bat for a few deliveries, besides offering critical insights to his team. Almost every year, he also features in a chat with Harsha Bhogle, where retirement is discussed without much being revealed.

In Sanju Samson, CSK has an aggressive batter and wicketkeeper. Still, over the next fortnight the Chennai franchise will sweat over Dhoni. The great Kapil Dev hobbled away with an injury in 1994, which forced his retirement. Hopefully, Dhoni will find his second wind, especially in the IPL's latest edition that stretches till May 31.

INBRIEF

Djokovic withdraws from Monte-Carlo Masters

Two-time winner Novak Djokovic has pulled out of the Monte-Carlo Masters, organisers announced on Friday. "Novak Djokovic has withdrawn from the tournament," they said, without specifying why the Serb had withdrawn from the April 5-12 event. "We send him our best wishes and hope to see him back on court very soon."

Asian Games: camp for kabaddi probables underway

The Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India, in collaboration with Mashal Sports, is organising a high-performance strength and conditioning camp as part of Asian Games preparation. Both the men's and women's probables (45 in each section) have begun training at the Inspire Institute of Sport, Ballari, from Friday. The camp concludes on April 2. The Asian Games will be held in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, from September 19 to October 4.

ROUND-UP

Siddhanth and Satwik.

Bronze medal for Siddhanth and Satwik

Karnataka's M. Siddhanth and M. Satwik bagged bronze medals at the 87th sub-junior and cadet National table tennis in Gandhidham, Gujarat.

Siddhanth lost in the U-13 youth boys singles semifinal to Ariv 11-7, 13-15, 11-8, 11-13, 6-11.

He then lost in the doubles last-four alongside Satwik to Vohra Trijal and Sharma Satwik 6-11, 11-7, 7-11, 12-10, 5-11.

Mandya gets the better of Kolar

Mandya District beat Kolar District 70-45 in a boys' match at the State junior basketball in Bengaluru on Saturday. Among girls, Nettakallappa BC 25 edged out Hoop-7 BC 25-22.

KSBA's summer camps

Karnataka State Billiards Association will conduct summer camps for billiards, snooker and swimming in April and May. For details, contact KSBA (080 - 43223222).

LIVE TELECAST

Formula One: Japanese GP, F1 TV, F1 TV Pro App & FanCode, 11.30 a.m.

Golf: Indian Open, Sony Sports Ten 2 & LIV, 12 p.m.

IPL: Star Sports 1 & JioHotstar, 7.30 p,m.

European Qualifiers: Sony Sports Ten 5 & LIV, 6.30 p.m. ; Sony Sports Ten 2 & LIV, 7.30 p.m.

Key is to give yourself the best chance to succeed: Buttler

The England star, who endured a dismal T20 WC, acknowledges that the nature of the game sometimes places outcomes beyond control; GT will be hoping its key player comes out firing

IPL-19

Amol Karhadkar
MUMBAI

Jos Buttler has been around long enough to know that form, like fortune, can be fleeting. And as the veteran England wicketkeeper-batter prepares to begin his Indian Premier League 2026 campaign with Gujarat Titans, he is drawing on experience rather than numbers to move past a disappointing ICC T20 World Cup.

Buttler endured a lean run in the global tournament, managing just 87 runs in eight innings at an average of 10.87 and a strike rate of 116. Yet, for the 35-year-old, the challenge heading into the IPL remains unchanged – irrespective of whether the runs have come or not.

"Whether I have been scoring lots of runs coming into the IPL or struggling, it's the same challenge," Buttler said in a virtual interaction on Saturday. "Can you prepare well? Can you get in a good headspace and give yourself the best chance to perform? You need the energy to keep trying, keep putting yourself out there and keep preparing well."

Buttler revealed he tried hard in the World Cup, but acknowledged that the nature of the game sometimes places outcomes beyond control.

"I put a lot of effort into that World Cup and for a multitude of reasons, it just didn't quite work out. There are elements of the game you can't control and everyone else is trying to do well too," he said, stressing the importance of accepting setbacks and moving forward.

Having spent 15 years at the highest level, Buttler knows fluctuations in form are part and parcel of a long career. "I have had times where I've been in good form and times where things didn't go to plan. You always reflect and analyse, but if there was one secret, everyone would score runs every time," he noted.

Gujarat Titans will be hoping Buttler finds his silken touch against Punjab Kings in New Chandigarh on Tuesday.

Picture of concentration: Buttler is leaving no stone unturned to end his lean patch. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Recuperating: Starc revealed he was undergoing rehab after not realising the extent of his shoulder and elbow issues. FILE PHOTO

DC's lead pacer Starc to miss early part of IPL

Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

Australia pacer Mitchell Starc clarified on Saturday that he won't be available for Delhi Capitals for the early part of IPL-19 due to a shoulder and elbow injury, but remains committed to joining the franchise as soon as possible.

Starc's remarks came after some former Indian cricketers and commentators criticised the left-armer in recent days for not linking up with the Capitals squad despite ostensibly being fully fit. The 36-year-old hasn't played any competitive cricket since January, when he was the chief architect of Australia's Ashes triumph and then featured in five games for Sydney Sixers in the Big Bash League. Having retired from T20Is last year, he was able to rest during the T20 World Cup in India and Sri Lanka.

In a statement on Instagram, the speedster stated that he was currently undergoing rehab after not realising the extent of his shoulder and elbow injury during the home summer.

"Despite the opinions and views of certain individuals with their platforms in and through the Indian media, I'm currently rehabbing and managing an injury in my shoulder and elbow, of which I didn't know the extent during the Australian summer," Starc posted.

"I do acknowledge this injury setback and timing is disruptive to the Delhi team, and I apologise for that and to the fans for not being available for the early part of this season. I remain committed to join DC, am in continual communication updating the team and will continue to do what I can to be available for DC as soon as possible," he added.

AIFF gets huge bid for ISL, Federation Cup

Ayon Sengupta
Neeladri Bhattacharjee

The All India Football Federation has received a bid in excess of ₹2,100 crore from Genius Sports for the ISL and Federation Cup for a span of 20 years.

The AIFF announced on Friday that it had opened commercial bids for the ISL, Federation Cup (formerly Super Cup), IWL, and the IWL 2.

The floated tender included rights for 15 years, with an option for a five-year extension. Moreover, the proposal also includes a five per cent increase in value every year over the duration of the agreement.

Genius Sports was the highest bidder at ₹2,129 crore for men's domestic football. It was much higher compared to the Dream-Sports-owned FanCode, the broadcast partner for the ongoing ISL season. FanCode offered approximately ₹36 crore for the first season, with the total bid coming to over ₹1,190 crore.

It is also learnt that the Reliance-owned Football Sports Development Limited (FSDL) came in with a late proposal for an extension of its previous deal – which expired on December 8, 2025 – but that was rejected by the AIFF.

Meanwhile, Capri Sports was the lone bidder for the top-two divisions of women's football, with a bid of over ₹150 crore. The company owns the UP Warriorz franchise in the Women's Premier League (WPL) and Bengal Warriorz in the Pro Kabaddi League (PKL). "Genius Sports has come up with a bid of over ₹2,100 crore for 20 seasons, while Capri Sports has bid between ₹150 and ₹160 crore," M. Satyanarayan, the AIFF's deputy secretary general, told *Sportstar*.

"We are happy that people are interested in Indian football. The bid evaluation report will be presented at the executive committee meet on March 29".

Commercial bids
Genius Sports – ISL/Federation Cup — Rs. 2129 Cr.: Approved
FanCode — ISL/Federation Cup — Around Rs. 1190 Cr.: Approved
FSDL — ISL — existing contract extension: Rejected
Capri Sports — IWL/IWL 2 – Around Rs. 160 Cr.

Wirtz's dazzling show lifts Germany past Switzerland

PRE-WC FRIENDLIES

Agencies
BASEL

Mikel Oyarzabal scored two impressive goals in Spain's 3-0 win over Serbia, and Florian Wirtz scored two and made two more as Germany twice came from behind to beat Switzerland 4-3, in pre-World Cup friendlies on Friday.

In other games, Ben White scored on his recall to the England side and then gave away a penalty in stoppage time as England drew 1-1 with Uruguay. White was in the right place 10 minutes from time to give England the lead after Cole Palmer's corner was flicked on and White poked the ball in at the far post.

Uruguay did not have a shot on goal and that looked like being the winner, only for White to clip Federico Viñas in the box.

In Basel, Germany went behind in the 17th minute when Dan Ndoye cut in from the left and crashed a shot past Oliver Baumann.

Stunning comeback: Wirtz, who hogged the limelight for Germany, jostles with Muheim for possession. AFP

Germany levelled nine minutes later when Jonathan Tah headed home Wirtz's cross from the left but Breel Embolo put Switzerland ahead again in the 41st with a diving header.

Wirtz brought Germany back into the game, when, on the stroke of half-time, his flighted pass carved open the Swiss defence and allowed Serge Gnabry to lift the ball over 'keeper Gregor Kobel. He gave Germany a 3-2 lead 11 minutes into the second half with the best goal of the night, his stunning right-foot shot from full 30 meters sailing over Kobel into the top corner of the net.

The results: Spain 3 (Oyarzabal 16, 44, Munoz 72) bt Serbia 0; Switzerland 3 (Ndoye 17, Embolo 41, Monteiro 79) lost to Germany 4 (Tah 26, Gnabry 45+2, Wirtz 61, 85); England 1 (White 81) drew with Uruguay 1 (Valverde 90+4-pen); Netherlands 2 (van Dijk 35, Reijnders 51) bt Norway 1 (Schjelderup 24); Austria 5 (Sabitzer 13-pen, Gregoritsch 51, Posch 59, Chukwuemeka 79, Seiwald 90+2) bt Ghana 1 (J. Ayew 77); Greece 0 lost to Paraguay 1 (Diego Gomez 52); Algeria 7 (Gouiri 19, 60, Mahrez 31-pen, Abada 45+1, Aouar 47, Ghedjemis 76, Benbouali 82) bt Guatemala 0; Morocco 1 (El Aynaoui 88) drew with Ecuador 1 (Yeboah 48).

Verstappen calls his Red Bull 'undriveable'

Agence France-Presse
SUZUKA

A despondent Max Verstappen labelled his Red Bull car "undriveable" after the four-time World champion qualified a lowly 11th for Sunday's Japanese Grand Prix.

The Dutchman, who has won at Suzuka for the past four years, dropped out in Q2 in another qualifying nightmare.

He has consistently railed against new Formula One regulations that see a 50-50 split between conventional and electrical power.

"The car never turns mid-corner, but at the same time this weekend, it's just oversteering a lot on entry. It's really difficult, unpredictable," Verstappen told *Sky Sports F1*.

"We thought we'd fixed it a little bit in FP3 (third practice), I mean there was still a lot of understeer in the car, but now in qualifying for me it was again undriveable, so that's something that we need to look at".

Timeless Vision redeems herself by winning the Donegal Plate

HYDERABAD: Trainer Laxman Singh's mare Timeless Vision, ridden by Yash Narredu, redeemed herself by winning the Donegal Plate, the main event of Saturday's (Mar. 28) races. The winner is owned by Mr. & Mrs. Cyrus Palia. Trainer Laxman Singh and Jockey Yash Narredu duo scored a grand treble each on the day.

1. KRISHNA PLATE (1,100M): DHANADEEPA (Mukesh Kumar) 1, Most Beautiful (Akshay K) 2, Golden Unicorn (P. Sai K) 3 and Iconic Star (Rafique Sk.) 4. Not run: Pinatubo. 2-1/2, Neck and 2. 1m 08.29s. ₹17 (w), 10, 12 and 15 (p). SHP: 32, THP: 36, FP: 42, Q: 21, Tanala: 155. Favourite: Dhanadeepa.
Owner: Mr. Rohit Gupta rep. Rolli Stud Dairy & Agri. Farm. Trainer: Magan Singh.

2. CRACK REGIMENT PLATE (1,200M): CATCH THE WORM (Akshay Kumar) 1, Arthisha (Mukesh K) 2, Red Hot Punch (Ashad Asbar) 3 and Rani Ruckus (Ajay K) 4. 3, 3-1/2 and Neck. 1m 11.98s. ₹18 (w), 12, 18 and 13 (p). SHP: 34, THP: 40, FP: 50, Q: 27, Tanala: 76. Favourite: Catch The Worm.
Owner: Mr. H.S. Srikanth. Trainer: R.H. Sequeira.

3. HIDDEN BLOOM PLATE (1,200M): BRILLIANT LAD (Yash Narredu) 1, Tootsie Darling (Trevor) 2, Mexican Wave (Akshay K) 3 and Only The Brave (Santosh Raj) 4. Not run: Coming Home. 2, 4 and 1/2. 1m 11.70s. ₹16 (w), 13, 10 and 10 (p). SHP: 27, THP: 29, FP: 30, Q: 16, Tanala: 45. Favourite: Brilliant Lad.
Owner: Mr. Teja Gollapudi. Trainer: Laxman Singh.

4. WANAPARTHY PLATE (1,400M): GOLD TOUCH (Yash Narredu) 1, Toshiro (Mukesh K) 2, Digital Empress (Akshay K) 3 and Master Class (Gaurav) 4. 1-1/4, 1-1/4 and 1-1/4. 1m 24.99s. ₹31 (w), 18, 17 and 10 (p). SHP: 38, THP: 44, FP: 86, Q: 41, Tanala: 230. Favourite: Digital Empress.
Owners: Col. K.S. Garcha, Mr. Sudarshan Singh Rathore Kanwar & Mr. Rishiraj Singh Rathore. Trainer: Laxman Singh.

5. DONEGAL PLATE (1,200M): TIMELESS VISION (Yash Narredu) 1, Sugar (Ashad Asbar) 2, Walking Thunder (Trevor) 3 and Calista Girl (Gaurav) 4. Not run: Romantic Grey, Star Of Opera, Azrinaz and Glorious Power. 3/4, 2 and 2. 1m 11.15s. ₹21 (w), 10, 25 and 13 (p). SHP: 69, THP: 37, FP: 200, Q: 147, Tanala: 467. Favourite: Timeless Vision.
Owners: Mr. & Mrs. Cyrus Palia. Trainer: Laxman Singh.

6. NALGONDA PLATE (1,400M): FEEL THE MAGIC (Mukesh Kumar) 1, Daring Spirit (P. Sai K) 2, La Fleuriere (Trevor) 3 and Konaseema (Ashad Asbar) 4. Not run: La Quinta. 1-1/2, 4-3/4 and 2-1/2. 1m 25.65s. ₹24 (w), 13, 24 and 11 (p). SHP: 73, THP: 37, FP: 153, Q: 216, Tanala: 934. Favourite: Feel The Magic.
Owner: Mr. K. Ram Gopal Rao. Trainer: Magan Singh.

7. HIMAYAT SAGAR PLATE (1,400M): WOLF CREEK (A. Ashad Asbar) 1, Dali's Destiny (Kuldeep Sr.) 2, Krystallos (P. Ajeeth K) 3 and China Town (Trevor) 4. 2-3/4, 3/4 and Neck. 1m 25.39s. ₹50 (w), 14, 14 and 25 (p). SHP: 45, THP: 105, FP: 128, Q: 57, Tanala: 1,293. Favourite: Dali's Destiny.
Owners: Mr. Imran Isa Sayyed, Mr. S. Saleem Shah & The Estate Of Late Mr. L.D' Silva. Trainer: R.H. Sequeira.
Jackpot: 70%: ₹2,289 (130 tkts.), 30%: 190 (671 tkts.). Mini Jackpot: (i) 219 (207 ztkts.), (ii) 1,776 (23 tkts.). Treble: (i) 96 (193 tkts.), (ii) 497 (57 tkts.).

This recognition means a lot and I owe it to my teammates, says a delighted Navneet

HOCKEY

ANI
NEW DELHI

Navneet Kaur was delighted to be conferred with the prestigious Balbir Singh Sr. Award for Player-of-the-Year at the Hockey India eighth annual awards 2025 held in New Delhi on Friday.

Navneet enjoyed a standout year, emerging as one of India's most consistent attacking players. She played a pivotal role in India clinching the silver medal at the FIH World Cup Qualifiers in Hyderabad recently, finishing as the third-highest goal scorer (four) and was adjudged Player-of-the-Tournament.

She also excelled during India's campaign at the Asia Cup, scoring six goals in the tournament as the team took the second spot. She also reached a significant personal milestone, completing 200 international caps.

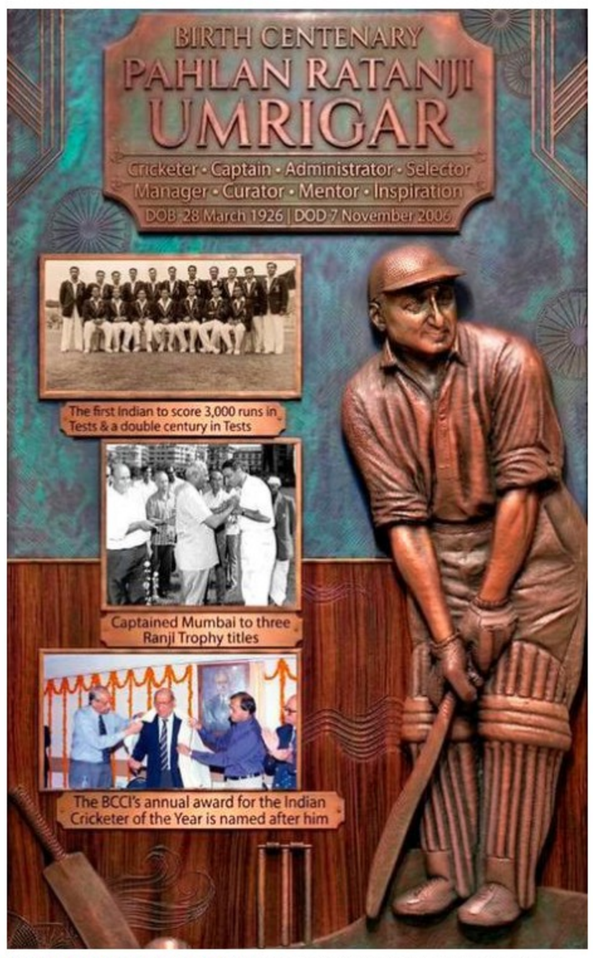
Expressing her joy after receiving the award, Navneet said: "This recognition means a lot and I owe it to my teammates whose constant support and belief have played a huge role in this. The awards are a great source of motivation for players across the country."

Looking ahead to a packed international calendar, she added, "We are gearing up for a crucial stretch of the season with major tournaments like the Nations Cup, World Cup and Asian Games. Our camp begins soon, and while we were pleased with our performance in the previous tournament, we know there are areas that need improvement. The focus is on addressing those gaps and continuing to raise our level as a team."

In the World Cup, set to take place from August 14 to 30, India is placed in Group D with China, England and South Africa.

Upbeat: Navneet is focused on giving her best as India gears up for tougher assignments. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Saluting a legend



Multi-faceted personality: Former India captain Polly Umrigar's birth centenary (March 28, 2026) was celebrated by the Mumbai Cricket Association by unveiling a metal plaque at the Sharad Pawar Cricket Museum on the Wankhede Stadium premises.

Chacarra remains on course to defend the Indian Open title

The Spaniard makes the most of Jarvis' slip-up as he looks to become the first to achieve the feat at the tough DLF course; Daffue and Fitzpatrick trail the leader by four shots with Schott and Law a further stroke back; Om Prakash is the best of the host nation's players

On the charge: Chacarra pulled ahead as the rest of the field faltered. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

GOLF

Uthra Ganesan
GURUGRAM

Eugenio Chacarra stayed on course to try and become only the fourth golfer to successfully defend his Hero Indian Open title with a four-stroke lead at the top on the penultimate day at the DLF Golf and Country Club here on Saturday.

A win on Sunday would also make the Spaniard the first to do so on this course that has hosted the event since 2017. SSP Chawrasia was the last golfer to defend his title in 2017 but his 2016 win had come at the Delhi Golf Club.

Before that, Jyoti Randhawa too had successive wins at the DGC. Chacarra, who won last year as one of only three players in the red on what is considered to be one of the toughest venues on the DP World Tour, shot a 70 for a three-day total of 10-under 206. The lowest four-day total belongs to Japan's Keita Nakajima, who shot a 17-under to win in 2024.

A well-judged putt on the seventh secured the first of three successive birdies. He then made back-to-back bogeys on the 13th and 14th.

But Casey Jarvis, his nearest challenger at the time, did worse with a bogey and a double on the same holes.

MJ Daffue and Alex Fitzpatrick were tied second with Freddy Schott and David Law a further shot back. Jack Senior at five-under had the best round for the day to be tied 10th. Experienced Om Prakash Chouhan was the best of the three Indians in the fray - Kshitij Naveed Kaul sinking an eagle on the eighth hole early in the morning en route to completing his overnight second round to sneak past the cut line – at one-over for tied 20th.

Top scores: 206: Eugenio Chacarra (Esp, 67-69-70); 210: Alex Fitzpatrick (Eng, 70-68-72), MJ Daffue (RSA, 71-67-72); 211: David Law (Sco, 71-70-70), Freddy Schott (Ger, 66-73-72); 212: Andy Sullivan (Eng, 72-71-69), Ewen Ferguson (Sco, 70-73-69), Casey Jarvis (RSA, 73-64-75); 213: Euan Walker (Sco, 71-70-72); 214: Calum Hill (Sco, 69-73-72), Jack Senior (Eng, 73-74-67), Ugo Coussaud (Fra, 71-69-74);
Indians: Om Prakash Chouhan 217 (73-71-73), Manoj S 222 (76-70-76), Kshitij Naveed Kaul 225 (73-75-77).

Antonelli leads Mercedes 1-2 as Verstappen suffers qualifying shock

JAPANESE GP

Agence France-Presse
SUZUKA

Kimi Antonelli took pole position for the Japanese Grand Prix ahead of Mercedes teammate George Russell on Saturday as Max Verstappen suffered another qualifying nightmare.

Mercedes has claimed one-two finishes at both Grands Prix so far in a flying start to the Formula One season and it was again dominant in dry conditions at Suzuka.

The 19-year-old Italian Antonelli became the youngest pole-sitter in F1 history two weeks ago in China and he made it two in a row with a fastest lap of 1min 28.778sec.

Early championship leader Russell was second, 0.298sec behind, with McLaren's Oscar Piastri third and Ferrari's Charles Leclerc fourth.

Antonelli, who won the first Grand Prix of his F1 career in China two weeks ago, said it was "a really clean session".

"There's still work to do in these big tracks with the energy, how to find a solution that allows us to push even more and drive without thinking too much," he said.Russell was fastest in Friday's first practice but he has trailed his younger teammate in every session since then. The British driver said he was struggling with his car for most of qualifying and admitted it was "not ideal" going into Sunday's race.

Russell's problems paled into insignificance compared with those facing four-time world champion Verstappen, who exited in Q2 and starts from a lowly 11th on the grid for Red Bull. McLaren's world champion Lando Norris was fifth, followed by Ferrari's Lewis Hamilton and Alpine's Pierre Gasly.

Red Bull's Isack Hadjar was eighth, with Audi's Gabriel Bortoleto and Arvid Lindblad of RB rounding out the top 10.

The grid: 1st row: Antonelli (Mercedes), Russell (Mercedes). **2nd row:** Piastri (McLaren), Leclerc (Ferrari). **3rd row:** Norris (McLaren), Hamilton (Ferrari). **4th row:** Gasly (Alpine), Hadjar (Red Bull). **5th row:** Bortoleto (Audi), Lindblad (Racing Bulls). **6th row:** Verstappen (Red Bull), Ocon (Haas). **7th row:** Hulkenberg (Audi), Lawson (Racing Bulls). **8th row:** Colapinto (Alpine), Sainz Jr (Williams). **9th row:** Albon (Williams), Bearman (Haas). **10th row:** Perez (Cadillac), Bottas (Cadillac). **11th row:** Alonso (Aston Martin), Stroll (Aston Martin).

Top of the pile: Antonelli receives the pole position award from Japanese sumo wrestler Kotozakura. AFP

GATI SHAKTI VISHWAVIDYALAYA
(A Central University under the Ministry of Railways, Government of India)
Lalbaug, Vadodara, Gujarat 390004

गति शक्ति विश्वविद्यालय
(रेल मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार के अधीन केन्द्रीय विश्वविद्यालय)
लालबाग, वडोदरा, गुजरात 390004

GSV/Acad/Admissions-2026 29.03.2026

ADMISSION NOTICE: AY 2026-27

Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (GSV), Vadodara is a Central University established by an Act of Parliament vide Central Universities (Amendment) Act 2022. The University is sponsored by the Ministry of Railways, Govt. of India. Being a University of first-of-its-kind, GSV focuses on transport and logistics related education, multidisciplinary research and with a big mandate for executive training.

Applications are invited for admission to the following academic programmes across Engineering and Management disciplines for the AY 2026-27:

Discipline	Level	Program	Duration	No. of Seats	Entrance Test
Technology	Under-graduate (Regular Programs)	B.Tech. in Civil Engineering (Specialization: Rail Engineering)	4 Year	60	JEE (Main) 2026 Admission through JOSAA. Visit JOSAA website https://josaa.nic.in/ for details.
		B.Tech. in Electronics and Communication Engineering (Specialization: Rail Engineering)	4 Year	60	
		B.Tech. in Mechanical Engineering (Specialization: Rail Engineering)	4 Year	60	
		B.Tech. in Electrical Engineering (Specialization: Rail Engineering)	4 Year	60	
		B.Tech. in Artificial Intelligence & Data Science (Specialization: Transportation and Logistics)	4 Year	60	
		B.Tech. in Aviation Engineering	4 Year	40	
		B.Tech. in Maritime Engineering	4 Year	30	
Management	Post-Graduate (Regular Programs)	MBA (Logistics and Supply Chain Management)	2 Year	30	MBA (LSCM) - CUET-PG/ XAT / CAT / MAT
		MBA (Ports and Shipping Logistics)	2 Year	30	
Technology/ Management	Doctoral (Regular Programs)	Ph.D (Engineering / Management) with a focus on Transportation & Logistics			GSV Entrance Test

Executive Programs – Exclusively for Working Professionals

Discipline	Level	Program	Duration	No. of Seats	Entrance Test
Technology	Post-Graduate	M.Tech (Intelligent Transport Systems)	3 Year	30	GSV Entrance Test
		M.Tech (Railway Engineering)	3 Year	30	
		M.Tech (Bridge and Tunnel Engineering)	3 Year	30	
		M.Tech (Roads and Highway Engineering)	3 Year	30	
Management	Post-Graduate	MBA (Logistics and Supply Chain Management)	2 Year	30	GSV Entrance Test
		MBA (Multi-modal Transportation)	2 Year	30	
		MBA (Metro Rail Management)	2 Year	30	
		MBA (Aviation and Operations Management)	2 Year	30	
		MBA (Infrastructure Asset Management)	2 Year	30	
		MBA (Digital Maritime)	2 Year	20	
Technology/ Management	Doctoral	Ph.D (Engineering / Management) with a focus on Transportation & Logistics (Exclusively for Working Professionals in Govt. / Industry / PSU, R&D organisations, Laboratories, Defence Forces, NGOs, and Banking / Finance Institutions)			GSV Entrance Test

For Application procedure and detailed information, visit the University website: **https://gsv.ac.in**
Contact us at: **admissions@gsv.ac.in** for any admission related query / information

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The only University in India exclusively focused on transport and logistics education.
- Multi-disciplinary programmes based on demand-driven curriculum addressing industry needs.
- Innovation Led & Industry Driven University with strong emphasis on industry connect.
- Collaborations with top Industry and Higher Education Institutes.
- Highly experiential and unique interdisciplinary pedagogical approach incorporating latest technologies.
- Financial support to Meritorious and needy students – (a) through GSV Financial Aid (upto 20% of students); (b) Corporate scholarships (Airbus, Siemens, CWC, Plasser, etc.).
- High-quality and experienced faculty with global exposure.
- Focus on 21st century skills: communication, critical thinking, innovation and design thinking.
- Project-based teaching-learning and well-structured internships at Indian Railway establishments and other sector-specific organizations.
- State of the art railways facilities and lab infrastructure.
- Excellent Hostel facilities for the UG students, female PG students, and PhD Research Scholars (for regular students only).
- Career Development Centre that enables professional development and career planning.

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NAAC A++ ACCREDITED | CATEGORY 1 GRADED AUTONOMY UGC, GOVT. OF INDIA | AACSB* ACCREDITED ASB COIMBATORE CAMPUS | University at Buffalo MBA-MS* Dual Degree An ASB Bengaluru collaboration

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*T & C apply